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THE NEBRASKA ELEMENTARY ENGLISH CURRICULUM IS BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT DESIRE TO READ, UNDERSTANDING OF ONE'S NATIVE LANGUAGE, AND COMPETENCE IN COMPOSITION DEVELOP FROM A CONTINUING EXPOSURE TO LITERATURE OF SUPERIOR QUALITY. THE SEQUENCE OF LITERARY WORKS AND ANALOGOUS COMPOSITIONS LEADS THE CHILD FROM AN APPREHENSION OF THE "MYTHIC" AND ANTHROPOMORPHIC TO AN AWARENESS OF THE REALISTIC AND ANALYTIC. AN ORAL APPROACH TO LITERATURE IS STRESSED. CHILDREN ARE ENCOURAGED NOT ONLY TO ENJOY AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS READ, BUT ALSO TO MANIPULATE LANGUAGE DEVICES THEMSELVES THROUGH ORAL STORYTELLING AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION. LITERATURE IS CLASSIFIED IN ONE OF NINE "PSEUDO-GENRES"--FOLK TALES, FANCIFUL TALES, ANIMAL STORIES, ADVENTURE STORIES, MYTHS, FABLES, OTHER LANDS AND PEOPLES, BIOGRAPHIES, AND HISTORICAL FICTION. EACH OF THE 70 UNITS IN THE SIX GRADES CONTAINS (1) INTRODUCTORY MATERIALS OUTLINING OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT AND RELATING IT TO OTHER UNITS, (2) BACKGROUND MATERIALS ABOUT AUTHORS, CHARACTERS, THEMES, AND STYLE, (3) SUGGESTIONS FOR INDUCTIVE TEACHING PROCEDURES, (4) RELATED COMPOSITION, LANGUAGE, AND POETRY EXERCISES AND ASSIGNMENTS, (5) BIBLIOGRAPHIES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AND (6) LISTS OF AUDIOVISUAL AIDS. IN GRADE ONE, CHILDREN ARE INTRODUCED TO LITERATURE IN ALL "PSEUDO-GENRES" EXCEPT HISTORICAL FICTION. TEACHING PROCEDURES EMPHASIZE IDENTIFICATION OF REPETITIVE SITUATION AND WORD PATTERNS IN LITERATURE AND RECOGNITION OF MEANING IN SIMPLE STORY FORMS. DRAWING UPON WHAT THEY LEARN FROM CLASS READING AND THEIR EXPLORATIONS IN LANGUAGE, CHILDREN ARE THEN ABLE TO DRAMATIZE SCENES AND COMPOSE STORIES OF THEIR OWN. THIS MANUAL IS AVAILABLE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 215 NEBRASKA HALL, LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 68508. (SEE ALSO TE 000 054 AND TE 000 055.) (JB)

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A CURRICULUM
FOR
ENGLISH

Grade 1

Units 1-12

TE000 048

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A CURRICULUM FOR ENGLISH

Grade 1

Units 1-12

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS · LINCOLN

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PREFACE

The version of A Curriculum for English published here is an extension of the suggestions made in the Woods Curriculum Workshop of 1961; it is the result of a peculiarly close collaboration between Nebraska classroom teachers and scholars from Nebraska and the country at large--a collaboration particularly intense between 1961 and 1964. The curriculum covers the years of kindergarten through high school in detail and makes suggestions for the first year of college. It is not a panacea for present problems in the teaching of English; it is more like a half formed slave struggling to free itself from the stone. In some cases, the materials represent the state of the art in 1961; in some cases, that of 1967; many of the materials are as incomplete, as imperfect or simplistic as the group which created them. They are offered to remind their audience that scholars can concern themselves with schools and that teachers can fulfill the demands of scholarship; they are also offered for whatever use they may have in the classroom. Since hundreds of people collaborated in the creation of these materials, no names are attached to them. They should remain anonymous and peregrine.

The Nebraska Curriculum
Development Center

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INTRODUCTION TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Nebraska elementary program is divided into units; the units center in the study of literature, often literature read aloud, and include work in language and composition integral to such study. It may be in order to describe the premises of the program.

I. Premises of the Program

For at least twenty centuries, the best literature produced in the western world was presented orally to audiences of many ages and social levels. And if it is true that great audiences produce great artists, then the audiences of such literature must have penetrated its meaning and been sensitive to its literary merit; there must have been some route of interchange of inspiration continually open between writers and audiences. From this it does not follow that children who as yet do not read should be insensible to the attractions of fine literature when it is appropriate to their level of intellect, imagination and rhythmic sense. Before a child is able to read, before he is able to cope with the only partially systematic English graphemic system, he has the need to come in contact with literature: if he cannot read, he can surely be read to--and this is a basic notion of the early units in this curriculum.

We should surprise few teachers in saying that children can tell stories, oral tales, cycles of tales; they can create their own literary culture so to speak, and they perhaps can do this best at the prompting and inspiration of excellent literary works. Storytelling, modeled and unmodeled, is thus a foundation activity suggested in this curriculum. The child's basically oral approach to literature will change as he masters reading skills, but he must know and feel that these reading skills are worth learning.

The elementary school program for language, literature and composition should not be confused with a reading program. It is neither such a program nor a substitute for such a program. The development of methods for the teaching of reading is the proper concern of the reading expert and not of this study. Further linguistic research may lead to improvements in methods for the teaching of reading; and, when sufficient research data indicates that these improvements have been made, they should be synthesized in this curriculum. Our concern is with showing such literature as will make reading worth the effort, composition an exercise in the imitation of excellence, and language study more than a bore.

The language, literature and composition program for the elementary school is designed to teach students (1) to comprehend the more frequent oral and written conventions of literature composed for young children--formal or generic conventions or simple rhetorical conventions; (2) to control these linguistic and literary conventions in their own writing; and (3) to comprehend consciously the more frequent grammatical conventions which they can handle in their speaking and writing.

One who plans an elementary curriculum must first identify the basic generalizations of the discipline, second, represent these generalizations so that they can be taught to children, and third, build a spiral curriculum which covers those basic concepts in ever greater depth, thus developing a progressively more sophisticated understanding of them. Once introduced in a relatively simple fashion, a concept will be treated somewhat more intensively each time it appears. All in all, the units of the curriculum intend to expose the student repeatedly to facts and ideas that he may use in order to proceed inductively to general conclusions about the conventions of good literature.

The child's sense of logic develops from an intuitive, anthropomorphic apprehension to the more analytical apprehension of the junior high school student. The curriculum's sequence of literary works and of suggested analogous compositions endeavors to display the same progress from the "mythic" and anthropomorphic to the realistic and the analytic, although this does not imply that the program at its upper levels ignores "fabulous" literature and comparable compositional forms. (The basic attitudes toward the psychology of children's literature, its relation to cognition, and the place of its emergence in psychology upon which this curriculum is based are set forth in the following books: Philippe Aries, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien regime*; Jan Van Den Berg, "Adults and Children," in *The Changing Nature of Man*: Northrup Frye, *Design for Learning* [a modification of the generic theory used in this program].)

II. The Units

The materials for the curriculum program in the elementary school consist of seventy specific units for the various grade levels plus two packets of ancillary materials: *Poetry for the Elementary Grades* and *Language Explorations for the Elementary Grades*. The units suggested for the elementary level endeavor to arrange literary works in an articulated sequence designed to develop the concepts essential to the literature program in the spiral fashion mentioned above. Sixty-nine of the units are divided into nine groups or "pseudo-genres":[1]

- folk tales
- fanciful stories
- animal stories
- adventure stories
- myth
- fable
- other lands and people
- historical fiction
- biography

Some of the selections in the curriculum could obviously be placed in more than one group, but such a classification serves the purposes of the curriculum in that it allows for stress on certain elements of stories, which in turn allows the sequential development of the principles of the program. The stories have not for the most part been selected because they "fit" into one of the nine categories; rather, the committees have first selected literary works of substantial merit and then fitted categories to serve the purposes of the program most conveniently.

During a 1963 summer workshop supported by the Woods Foundation, the entire elementary program was revised and new units were developed, following a consistent format adopted during the process of revision. Some explanation of each section of the revised units may be helpful.

(1) Core Text

From the versions of stories or the editions of books recommended as core selections for each unit, the committees of teachers who worked on the Nebraska project have selected those versions or editions which they feel have the most usefulness to the program or the highest degree of literary integrity. It is not absolutely essential that the teacher always use the version or edition recommended, but she should make sure that any version used will be entirely suitable to the objectives of the unit. Core selections which are short and difficult to obtain are occasionally reprinted in the packets.

(2) Alternate Selections

Most packets list suitable substitutes for the core selections, should the teacher not be able to obtain or for any reason not wish to use the core selection. These alternates may be treated in much the same fashion as that suggested for the core selection: they will afford the teacher variety in materials as she teaches the program over a period of years. The alternate selections may also remind the teacher that she is strongly urged to develop her own units when she discovers other materials suitable to the program.

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[1] The other unit of the seventy is recommended for the sixth grade level and discusses the poetry of Robert Frost.

(3) General Introduction

This section of each unit outlines the major objectives of the unit, discusses the "genre" of the works presented, and outlines the relationship between the unit in question and other units in the curriculum.

The articulation of the units in the program is extremely important: it gives the teacher of one grade some idea of what her students have done previously and what they will be expected to do later. It may save her from resorting to drills that will "teach her students to handle the language properly," in a vain attempt to cover every area of English in one grade.

The units which are suggested in the literature and composition program are not necessarily to be used at a particular grade level. They are sliding units: that is, the grade levels are suggested only. In dealing with the better students, the teacher may wish to cover both the first and second grade packets by the end of the child's first year in school. Again, in dealing with the slower students, the teacher may not cover more than the first half of the first grade units. The interests and abilities of the class will dictate the most suitable rate of presentation as well as the order of the units within a grade level packet. Sometimes it is mentioned that one unit should be taught before or after some other unit in the same grade level, but for the most part the order during any one year is left entirely to the teacher.

It is important, however, that the program follow the general sequence established within each classification. Within each "vertical" series of units (all the units on "folk tales," on "fanciful stories," on myth, fable, etc.) there is a definite progression from the first grade through the sixth grade units in the complexity of concepts presented. The charts on pages following show how these vertical sequences work, and how the progression from grade to grade is accomplished.

For instance, the "fable" units in the first two grades introduce the child to the common devices and patterns of the simplest fables. The literary purposes of those devices and patterns are exhibited by stories in the third grade unit. The fourth grade "fable" unit and the fifth grade unit on the fables of ancient India offer a more intensive, more analytical study of the classical fable form; the series culminates in the sixth grade study of Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows: the "epic" fable in a humorous, satiric, allegorical representation of the steady and the gross in modern society.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNITS

Grade	FOLK	FANCIFUL	ANIMAL	ADVENTURE
1	Little Red Hen Three Billy Goats Gruff The Gingerbread Boy	Little Black Sambo Peter Rabbit Where the Wild Things Are	Millions of Cats The Elephant's Child How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin Ferdinand	Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain The Little Island
2	Little Red Riding Hood Story of the Three Pigs Story of the Three Bears	And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street	Blaze and the Forest Fire How Whale Got His Throat The Beginning of the Armadillos The Cat That Walked by Himself	The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins The Bears on Hemlock Mountain
3	Sleeping Beauty Cinderella or the Little Glass Slipper Mother Holle	The Five Chinese Brothers Madeline Madeline's Rescue	The Blind Colt How the Camel Got His Hump How the Leopard Got His Spots The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo	Winnie-the-Pooh Mr. Popper's Penguins
4	Febold Feboldson	Charlotte's Web	Brighty of the Grand Canyon	Homer Price
5	Tall Tale America Rapunzel The Woodcutter's Child The Three Languages	The Snow Queen The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe	King of the Wind	The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood Island of the Blue Dolphins
6	The Seven Voyages of Sinbad	Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass A Wrinkle in Time	Big Red	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNITS - Continued

Grade	MYTH	FABLE	OTHER LANDS AND PEOPLE	HISTORICAL FICTION	BIOGRAPHY
1	The Story of the First Butterflies The Story of the First Woodpecker	The Dog and the Shadow The Town Mouse and The Country Mouse	A Pair of Red Clogs		They Were Strong and Good George Washington
2	The Golden Touch	The Hare and the Tortoise The Ant and the Grasshopper	Crow Boy	Caroline and Her Kettle Named Maud	Ride on the Wind
3	Daedalus and Icarus Clytie Narcissus	Chanticleer and the Fox The Musicians of Bremen	The Red Balloon	The Courage of Sarah Noble	Christopher Columbus and His Brothers
4	Hiawatha's Fasting Theseus and the Minotaur Arachne Phaeton and the Chariot of The Sun	Jacobs: The Fables of Aesop	A Brother for the Orphelines	Little House on the Prairie The Matchlock Gun	Willa Leif the Lucky
5	Ceres and Prosperine Atalanta's Race Jason The Labors of Hercules	Bidpai Fables Jataka Tales	The Door in the Wall	Children of the Covered Wagon This Dear Bought Land	Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist
6	The Children of Odin The Hobbit	The Wind in the Willows	Hans Brinker Secret of the Andes	The Book of King Arthur and his Noble Knights	Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence

CORRELATIVE UNITS: "You Come Too" - Poetry of Robert Frost - Grade 6; Poetry for the Elementary Grades; Language Explorations for Elementary Grades.

Insofar as fables usually treat of animals acting with human characteristics, the fourth grade unit on fables is related to all the elementary units containing stories about animals. As the study of a form which characteristically uses the oblique perspectives of satire, symbolism, and allegory, the series on the fable points to many other units concerned with other levels of meaning and with simple symbolism (for example, the Grade 5 unit, _The Door in the Wall_). Besides coordinating with other elementary units in an informal investigation of literary forms, expressions, and meanings, this fourth grade "fable" unit helps to form an important foundation for more analytical secondary units: units which take up the satiric use of the fable (ninth and twelfth grade units on satire); units which take up more sophisticated Greek literature (seventh grade unit on the classical myth, ninth grade unit on the epic, and tenth grade unit on tragedy); and units which take up techniques for attacking secondary levels of meaning (Grade 7 units, _The Making of Stories_ and _The Meaning of Stories_).

Insofar as the fourth grade unit studies stories which express Greek moral idealism, it relates to the entire curriculum's consideration of literature as a vehicle for expressing the corruption of the nature of the good life and for expressing imaginatively the essential moral and ethical precepts and assumptions of our culture.

Again, the sequence of units on the folk tale, beginning with the first grade, presents familiar folk tales selected from a great variety of cultures and recorded in a great variety of modes; these works share characteristics stemming from their common origin in the body of oral folk traditions. The first grade unit concentrates on the oral and repetitive features of the folk tale; the second grade unit exhibits common plot patterns in a series of stories; and the third grade unit introduces the student to the magical world of fairy-land and reviews the common structural motifs of folk literature; the fourth grade unit and one fifth grade unit examine the tall tale, the most typical form of American folk literature. The other fifth grade unit on folk tales builds upon the knowledge of all those units to begin an investigation of the symbolic and allegorical meanings that the devices common to all folk literature tend to express. The stories become more rewarding as they become more complex.

(4) Background information for the teacher

This section discusses stylistic characteristics of the works, their structure, motif, theme, and the author and his style. Not every topic is included in every unit--for instance, a discussion of the author is not always pertinent or possible.

Note: The material included in this section of each unit, as well as that in the General Introduction, is for the teacher: it is not intended to be communicated directly to students at the elementary level. These materials are provided on the assumption that a teacher will teach more effectively if she understands something of the literary nature of stories and of their place in the curriculum. The teacher should know all that she can about the meaning and literary method of the work so that, whenever and wherever she can, she may bring to the students those insights that she has and, more importantly, so that she can encourage her students when they show evidence of gaining insights themselves.

> *But* the teacher should not deliver lectures and ready-made literary analyses to elementary school children. She should not deliver the background material in the units to students but lead them when and as they can to perceive what a work is about. She should not ask children to recognize and apply the technical critical terminology of the interpretive analyses given in these sections of the units: the primary purpose of the curriculum is to create understanding, not conventional bourgeois citizens or polite little boys, however desirable the creation of these may be.

Presumably the children will enjoy the stories; they will gain some initial bits of evidence for an eventual inductive recognition of the nature of some kinds of literature; and the patterns of the stories will furnish them with some preliminary tools for their own attempts to organize their own experiences into forms that others can understand and enjoy.[1]

(5) Suggested procedures

In planning with the literature units, the teacher must remember that the most important single facet of the program is the child's experience with the literature itself. Even as the poet endeavors to establish his relationship to his audience, so the teacher should seek to establish rapport with her audience before she begins to read to the children. The teacher who reads should be familiar with her story whether she reads it or tells it. She should know the rhythms of the sentences, the rhythm of the plot. She should have practiced the story so that she can read it through with a sense of the music of its language and meaning. If the book is illustrated, she should know when to show pictures and when not to show pictures. If the child reads a story or a creative composition to the class, he should have an opportunity to prepare himself for the reading. He, too, should have an opportunity to establish his rapport with the class. The reading of good literature to children or the reading of good literature by children should not be regarded as a reward for good behavior or something to do if the class has time; it should constitute a basic part of the school curriculum.

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[1] The editors should like here to acknowledge their indebtedness during the preparation of these introductory essays to two of the most prominent books on children's literature, May Hill Arbuthnot's *Children and Books* and Huck and Young's *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*. Every elementary teacher should have these two standard works on her personal bookshelf. She also might see "Analyzing Literature in the Elementary Institute," an article by Paul A. Olson and Ned S. Hedges in *Source Book on English Institutes for Elementary Teachers* (published by MLA-NCTE, 1965) for notes on techniques and sample analyses.

The fact that the suggested procedures are divided into various sections--literature, composition, language exploration, extended activities--should not lure the teacher into believing that these activities are separate and unconnected. These divisions are made purely for the sake of convenience and uniformity in the organization of the units. The composition and language activities must grow directly out of the child's experience with the literature; the teacher should seize upon opportunities to unify activities and literature presentation. It is a basic premise of this curriculum that probably the best basis for building a child's competence in composition and his understanding of the nature and possibilities of his native language is an exposure to literature of superior quality over a relatively long period of time. The composition section rarely makes a distinction between oral and written composition exercises; this decision is left to the teacher on the basis of the abilities, interest, and readiness of her students.

(6) Poetry

Two "core" poetry texts are recommended for the elementary program: May Hill Arbuthnot's Time for Poetry and The Golden Treasury of Poetry, edited by Louis Untermeyer. In each of the units, related poems are suggested for study in connection with the units. If the poem recommended appears in one of these two "core" books, its title and author are listed. Poems for Grades K-6, along with suggestions for the teaching of poetry in the elementary school, are combined in the ancillary packet Poetry for the Elementary Grades.

(7) Bibliography

The study of the core book should not end the unit. If the student has properly mastered the conepts which the core book is intended to communicate, he should be ready to go on to read further works. The works suggested in the bibliography of the literature units vary in difficulty and in appeal to children, but each is realted to the central matter studied in the unit. It is better for the teacher to overestimate the reading ability of the child than to underestimate it when she selects individualized readings which cluster about the core readings. The units presume that the teacher has made a careful effort to take an inventory of the child's literary interests to discover what books he reads, what books are read to him at home, what kinds of television programs he sees--in short, the kinds of entertainment which nourish him. A teacher who knows such things and knows them well may be better able to supply appropriate works for individual student reading.

III. Literature

A. The Child's World and Children's Literature:

It may be useful for us to set forth our conceptions of the history and purpose of children's literature.

Children's literature as a species of literature addressed exclusively to an audience of children would seem to have appeared fairly recently, emerging as a significant species only in the eighteenth century. Recent historians of childhood relate both the appearance and the distinguishing features of children's literature to changes which have occurred in the social pattern of western life--to changes in the idea of ideal childhood and ideal family pattern as these relate to general community patterns. As adult life became more complex in its technology and more remote from the life of the child, a separate species of literature appeared, setting forth the myths of childhood as opposed to the myths of adulthood. Whereas sixteenth century books for children are generally didactic books about the adult roles of a craftsman or a gentleman, or religious books which speak rather frankly of sex, death, and the meaning of life, the eighteenth century begins to produce a distinctive children's literature. The evidence available to us suggests that children in earlier times who read fiction at all read easy adult works--romances and fables--which were not censored to protect the "delicacy" of the child. The change from uncensored adult literature for children to a literature written specifically for a child audience appears rather obviously in The Perrault Mother Goose (1724). While the Perrault book contains such one time folktales as "Little Red Riding-Hood," "Tom Thumb," and "Blue Beard," the language of the tales is adapted to make them appropriate to a children's audience; they already display the special aesthetic features which mark children's literature--the aesthetic distance, the broad strokes and colors, the use of incremental repetition, the symmetrical episodic plot, and so forth. The sexual detail remains rather more frank than contemporary taste would dictate for children's books and the moral symbolism rather more obviously pointed by a moral.

Today's child reads a literature radically different from adult literature partly because he lives in a world radically separated from the adult world. At the pre-school or early school level he tends, as Piaget has shown, to see "nature" immediately before him and to relate its events to anthropomorphic personal or semipersonal forces rather than to an impersonal causal continuum. Technological specialization has destroyed the world of open shops through which the medieval-Renaissance child wandered, of benches where he took his place beside his father to learn his trade, and has replaced it with a professional-industrial world where adult roles are neither public nor obvious. New urban industrial social patterns generally protect the American child from basic adult experiences of sexuality, war, and death. Concomitantly, the child's literature portrays generally a nonnaturalistic, nonscientific physical world which may have more in common with that of the Greek myth-maker than with that of the contemporary adult. It deals with those roles in human society which are publicly and easily understood--often those symbolized by special apparel--the roles of peasant and king, of fireman, trainman, carpenter, and shipman. Death and sex are either not presented at all or presented in a flattened form: the wolf "eats up" Little Red Riding-Hood at no pain to her, the Prince's romance with Rapunzel is a rescue and a ride. Modern versions of "Red Riding-Hood" soften the ending even further, allowing the woodsman to find her cowering in the kitchen instead of in the wolf's belly. As adult social relations in the public world become more complex, the central social group in most literature that is attractive to children (aside from fable and myth) comes to be the family. Beyond the family group in modern children's literature, the world is distorted, comic, or even mysterious, dark, fearful, and wildly grotesque. (Conrad may have exaggerated slightly, but only slightly, when in writing about Galsworthy's Forsyte Saga, he said that all fairy and folk literature is essentially about the home.) To the degree that children do not understand the deeper, more complex motives and considerations which govern adult behavior, their literature presents flat characters. In its treatment of nature, of social roles and social life, of inner drives and inner psychological life, children's literature is set at some distance from adult ways of conceiving--not necessarily at equal distance from children's ways. Perhaps anachronistically the literature which most appeals to children is often called fanciful, surrealistic, mythic, improbable (anachronistically because probability is relative to the experience which measures it). In any case, teachers of children's literature could well consider how and why children's literature is different, how it sees things in a different slant of light from adult literature, particularly from so-called naturalistic or realistic adult literature which is more or less illusionistic or more or less an exploration of adult psychology.

B. The sense of form and plot:

If, in its treatment of nature, society, and the human personality, children's literature differs from modren adult literature, it also differs in aesthetic or style at the level of the organization of sentences and larger units. The characteristic aesthetic devices of the children's story (the episodic plot, the quick action with a sudden ending, the emphasis on rhythmic excitement, onomatopoeia, repetitive oral formulae, etc.) appear to appeal to senses of rhythm and form which are basic in the child and almost innate. So also do the common plot patterns.

The units of the curriculum repeatedly present variations of the four structural motifs of children's literature which are related to the sense of family and "other-than-family": (1) a small person's journey from home to isolation away from home; (2) a small person's or a hero's journey from home to a confrontation with a monster; (3) a helpless figure's rescue from a harsh home and the miraculous creation of a secure home; and (4) a conflict between a wise beast and a foolish beast. The family unit and the home are described as ultimately good, even if, as in (3) above, it may not be so originally for a small hero. That terrors lurk outside the home in many stories--wolves, tigers, the "dread of the forest"--may reflect the mystery of the technologically-oriented outside world for the child.

Various forms of the four basic plot patterns, appearing in many works throughout the program, should give the students some of the "form consciousness" which Mr. James Squire has indicated to be basic to reading and to composition. Rather than over-emphasize similarities among stories, a teacher should help students to see how a single plot type can be the vehicle of many different meanings; in short, she should point out similarities in order that the children recognize the differences in meaning and content.

* * *

All children's books do not "mean" the same thing. Stories which deal with the child leaving home may all dramatize much the same familial values, but the evils which each child encounters are usually quite different, and suggest a different meaning within each story. Peter Rabbit, Bartholomew Cubbins, and Little Red Riding-Hood all come from good homes, but Peter Rabbit meets the monstrous Mr. McGregor because he is imprudent; Bartholomew meets the monstrous king and the monstrous executioner because the social system in which he lives is unjust and silly; and Little Red Riding-Hood is destroyed simply because she is too little to make the discriminations needed before one is to venture beyond the home. The monsters encountered by the children in Little House on the Prairie are monsters which actually confronted the pioneers: natural disaster, snow, drought, Indians; the monsters which Pecos Bill encounters are similar frontier monsters, but presented in a different fictional mode, in an exaggerated heroic form. In the case of stories which begin in a harsh home, the fairy godmother who comes to rescue Cinderella is only a substitute parent; the guardian angel who comes to rescue the child in the "Woodcutter's Child" is more than this, for she is a kind of picture of conscience, of those things which remind us of our innocence and of our guilt.[1]

To accede to the above analysis of children's fiction may not be to teach it differently, except as a study of children's fiction from this perspective may bring a teacher to try more seriously to visualize what a specific child may see in a specific piece of fiction. The children's literature program of the Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, however, is organized not to pass over the peculiar features of children's literature but to place them in a heightened light so that, for instance, a single unit will contain nothing but stories in which nature takes on a mythic life and force or in which a child or miniscule figure journeys away from home to encounter a monster. The children are never asked to interpret a story directly; they certainly are not invited to become symbol mongers; the interpretation which they do, they do by picturing stages in the action of a story, dramatizing it. After they have a fairly good sense of the resources of a narrative mode, they write, in the mode of the story, a work of their own. What this method may do is to give children a scaffolding for the writing of rather longer compositions than would conventionally appear in their writing. It may also give them an opportunity to exploit, for their own purposes, the conceptual "gestalts," the rhythmic and aesthetic devices, of a body of art which answers to their peculiar understandings.

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[1] Hence a teacher may properly be concerned with what may be spoken of as a "moral" or "philosophic" comment of a work for children--if one understands these words in a sense which is not too heavy handed. For instance, in works for children, the good person is usually beautiful and the wicked person, ugly: a technique which does not suggest that goodness makes one beautiful or that wickedness makes one ugly but which uses beauty as a symbol for goodness and ugliness for wickedness. The actions of ugly and beautiful people frequently establish the moral polarity of the work. Thus, good people in children's works are often portrayed as capable, through their goodness, of transforming the society about them (for instance in Cinderella or Little Tim), and the good are usually pictured as transparent and honest: what lies on the surface is one with what is within; on the other hand, evil and ugly people are full of mere complexity--as conniving, rationalistic, designing, subtle, and utterly closed sensibilities. (Footnote continued on next page.)

IV. Composition[1]

The program in composition tries to give the elementary student:

(1) a sense of the expressive possibilities of the sound of language;
(2) a capacity to manipulate syntactic patterns and to choose the "most desirable" syntactic pattern;
(3) a capacity to manipulate simple rhetorical devices (metaphor, simile, etc.) and a simple understanding of how consideration of the relation between speaker and audience affects one's handling of oral and written language; and
(4) a capacity to write in fictional modes analogous to those studied in literature readings and to add more analytic modes of writing to these very gradually.

In its portrayal of a moral universe children's literature does not always suggest the tragic sense that virture and reward are not one, that both sorrow and lifegiving rain fall on the just and the unjust alike. The rewards of virtue in children's literature are granted from above almost, and they are both spiritual and physical. Cinderella receives the reward of the prince and happiness; Little Tim, a secure return to his home and success in school. On the other hand, the designing, secretive, and complex are not destroyed from above but destroy themselves--or somehow shed their wickedness; and their cruelty and wickedness almost never originates in the child's group but in the adult group--with the stepmother, with the unknown man who persecutes the black stallion; with *large* monsters whose actions are inexplicable; with the military stoats and weasels who take over Toad Hall. Thus, there is a sense of a kind of "granting" in the rewarding of good and of "earning" in the rewarding of evil--the sense of a world fated to be perfect.

[1] The treatment of two important topics, Composition and Language, is here necessarily brief. The teacher should also see the manuals for elementary teachers which are written expressly on these subjects.

A significant part of the Nebraska Curriculum Program is its provision for a wide variety of creative composition based directly upon literary study; the purpose of having children do creative composition is to get them to represent their own thoughts, their own fictions, and their own values in their own language, both oral and written. It is to give them a sense of the music of language, a sense that they can master that music. It is to give them a sense that they know forms of literature and can communicate through those forms. Children can learn to control a wide variety of the grammatical and lexical resources of the language in their compositions and a wide variety of the symbolic and representational resources offered by the literary forms if they are offered a sequence of literary models and invited to do model writing based on the sequence. The models offered for student emulation may represent syntactic, rhetorical, or literary forms.

It should be possible to display stories so as to give children a sense of their patterns and so as to allow children to create stories of their own which express their conceptions of the nature and meaning of things. It should be possible to allow children to make up narrative cycles around such patterns. It may be possible to give them visual models which show, for instance, the secure home, the monster, the rescue from the monster, and to ask them to compose stories concerning the visual models which are offered to them. Children at this level are perhaps more ready to handle fictional modes of communication than they are to handle direct modes of communication. This does not mean that their writing is second-hand writing. It means that they have mastered the conventions of communication of a literature which is properly theirs.

Children should first see what the language can do at its best, and they should then be given an opportunity to try for the best that they can do; children should not be so constantly reminded of mistakes that they come to feel they do not know the language and cannot become native speakers in the fullest sense of the word. Instead they should be led to the difference between the oral and written language and realize that they must include certain signals in their written language which are not necessary in the spoken language. They should understand that the thought of any writing is important, important enough to require the signals which will make that thought accessible to others. If the red pencil is to be used at all, it is perhaps better used to mark passages in student writing which are especially good. When the teacher corrects what the student has done, she might well say to the student, "I like this very much. Do you think that you might ------ ? You have a good idea here. How can we make it clear?" etc. As a substitute for the correction of compositions, the teacher might have students get together in small groups, read their compositions to each other, and make suggestions. Finally, the teacher who reads the child's composition to the class should never do so without the child's permission. If the child is asked to read the composition before the class, he should be allowed time to prepare for the reading, so that he can read with poise and fluency. At the earlier levels where a child cannot write down his own compositions, the teacher may wish to serve as a scribe, taking down the stories and observations which the children make. The language which the child uses should be altered as little as possible; it does not help a child to compose if the teacher in part makes up his composition.

To suggest that the punitive correction of a child's theme is not particularly efficacious is not to suggest that the teacher make no analysis. She should analyze carefully the usage levels which the child exhibits, the syntactic patterns which he uses, the logical processes which he appears to be developing, the narrative patterns which predominate in his stories. Such analysis should become, like the results of I. Q. tests and achievement tests, part of the teacher's background on a child. The analysis should permit the teacher to introduce the child to reading which will sharpen his sense of the possibilities of language in the areas where he is deficient or give him new insights into what he can do with narrative or expository prose. The analysis may give the teacher some understanding of the kinds of linguistic exercise which she should give to the children to give them a sense of the broad resources of the language.

V. Language

The materials for language study in the elementary school program consist of (1) a "language explorations" section in the part of each unit devoted to suggested procedures; (2) a separate resource packet, Language Explorations for Elementary Grades, containing a brief introduction to modern language study, a statement of the objectives of language study at each level, and a great number of linguistic games and activities useful in elementary school classrooms.

The whole of the language program for the elementary school is directed toward a few rather clear-cut goals. It is directed:

(1) toward displaying to children that English is primarily a word-order language, that the structure of English syntax is often of the utmost importance;
(2) toward giving children an understanding of the sound (phonology) of the language, its music;
(3) toward giving them an understanding of the language's historical dimensions (where our vocabulary came from, etc.) and of the evolution of its spelling system, understandings so important not only to spelling, but to reading; and

(4) toward giving them an understanding of the extent to which punctuation is a written representation of the suprasegmental features of spoken discourse.

The taxonomic study of language, like the analytic study of literature, depends on logical skills which are not sufficiently fully developed in the elementary school child to make the formal study of linguistics feasible at this level. Yet the study of phonology, morphology, and syntax, as well as of the history of the language and its dialects, does have some place in the elementary school; it can serve first as a preparation for a later formal junior high school study of linguistics and second as a device for freeing students and teachers from prescriptive attitudes toward language, attitudes which are likely to inhibit their flexibility in handling syntax and vocabulary. Since the child ordinarily enters school with a full intuitive grasp of the sound, morphology, and syntactic repertory of the language, he may appropriately be exposed to a language and literature program which will conform to and strengthen this grasp. Until the child has a good control of basic reading skills, the program must perforce be an oral one; even after the student controls the basic reading skills, however, a large part of the program may properly continue to be oral since such oral exposure to literature may quicken his ear to the "tunes" of language, sharpen his sense of syntax, and continue to widen his oral vocabulary.

VI. Conclusion

The elementary units do not make heavy demands on the overt analytical capacities of students: The stories exemplify important principles of literary form, and teach them without much suggestion that the student talk about the underlying formal principles. At the primary level, it may be both easier and more profitable for the student to perceive the principle by encountering the work than by talking about it. Intellectualizing which is prematurely forced upon students may degenerate into mere manipulation of jargon. Similarly, the generalizations describing the structure of our language, or the generalizations describing the structures of discourses can probably be embodied in explorations and activities appropriate to elementary children long before the children are able to discuss or write about them.

Although these ideas should not be discussed or written about in the elementary classroom, they can be taught to some level of the students' understanding, and taught in such a way that secondary school teachers can build on them. The elementary school teacher need not, indeed should not, lecture about the concept of the hero predominant in Ancient Greece; she should realize that an imaginative teaching of the story of the girl who goes out to meet the wolf may prepare students for a more perceptive reading of the story of the hero who goes out to meet the dragon. While the two stories do not "mean" the same thing or belong to the same genre, they do, in part, share something of the same form; thus a student who has been introduced sensibly, step by step, to elementary school stories in which a central character goes away alone from his home or his homeland to face its enemies will be better prepared to handle the communication of this particular narrative convention in more sophisticated Greek literature. Again, the child who has been allowed to create an oral-aural "literary culture" in his own primary classroom probably is likely better to understand how such cultures work when he studies the Odyssey or Beowulf.

One may say that the literature program moves from the world of children's literature in two directions: first, in the direction of heroic and mythical literature; and, second, in the direction of realistic literature. The less fully developed characters of children's literature are replaced by the subtle and carefully analyzed characters of the realistic novel. The fairy tale which ends, "and so they lived happily ever after" is replaced by the comedy; the adventure story, by the epic; the simple fable by such satiric fables as Animal Farm and Gulliver's Travels. Huckleberry Finn follows Tom Sawyer; The Tale of Two Cities follows Children of the Covered Wagon; the Biography of Samuel Johnson follows Willa.

In the area of linguistics, the linguistic explorations of the elementary school are replaced by the systematic study of the language proposed for the junior high school. In the area of composition, the creative compositions of the primary school are replaced by the more analytic compositions of the secondary school. The child who in the elementary school has explored the phonemic alphabet, syntactic manipulations, or compounding is likely better to comprehend these subjects when he encounters a formal study of them in the junior high school or high school. A child who has been asked consistently to make inferences and discover analogies is likely to comprehend better the nature of induction and the logical implications of analogies when he encounters these subjects, say, in the senior high school. The boy who has had to write for a particular audience, who has had to choose appropriate fictional or rhetorical forms for them, a diction, a "logic," a set of sentence patterns, and a rhetorical organization which is most likely to persuade that audience, may better understand the formal structure of the rhetorical discipline when he meets it in the senior high school.

As a student turns from the wide-eyed child to the gawky adolescent, the academic demands which are placed upon him are heavier and more complex. He is asked to be a man intellectually. He is likely to be a better man in this sense if he has known, as a child, the best literature which he can know at that level, if he knows a description of the language which is simple but accurate. Such is the belief, however naive, which underlies the structure of the elementary school program.

Unit 1: Folk Tale:

THE LITTLE RED HEN

THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

THE GINGERBREAD BOY

FOLK TALE:
THE LITTLE RED HEN
THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF
THE GINGERBREAD BOY

CORE TEXTS:

Note: Since the stories of this unit are all old folk tales, numerous versions of each story exist. What this unit says about the stories is based on the following versions: for "The Little Red Hen," the one which follows the process of making bread (the hen finds some wheat, plants it, harvests the crop, takes it to the miller, bakes the bread, and she and her chicks eat it because the other animals refuse to help at any stage but the last); for "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" and "The Gingerbread Boy," the versions found in May Hill Arbuthnot, Time for Fairy Tales (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1952, revised 1961). Selection of a version should depend on the objectives of this unit; to satisfy those objectives it is essential that the version used contain verbal repetition as well as repetition of plot situation.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This unit deals with children's literature that has developed through oral, or "folk," traditions. The stories in the unit are notable for a stylistic feature common to most "folk" literature, namely repetition, both verbal repetition and the repetition of parallel incidents in an episodic plot. Consequently, the unit concentrates on the "oral" and "repetitive" features of the stories. That being so, the major objectives of this unit are: (1) to give children some experience with literature produced in the oral traditions of folk literature; (2) to allow children to participate orally, both in listening to an oral presentation and in assisting with the oral presentation; (3) to help them in formulating their own world of experience into an oral composition; (4) to give them experience with literature that depends upon repetition as a primary literary device; (5) to give children the opportunity to devise their own stories by using repetition as a structural device; and (6) to allow them to have an enjoyable experience with literature. A child does not need to be taught that listening to stories and making up stories can be great fun.

Since this unit is suggested as the first unit of the first grade level, there can be no discussion of relationships to previous units. However, since the devices of repetition are part of the stock-in-trade of children's literature, the unit forms a foundation for a large number of other primary and intermediate units. The repetition of words and situations in the stories of this unit not only have a strong rhythmic appeal to children, but they may also serve as an introduction to some of the devices of other works which have oral or semi-oral origins, some works of seminal importance in the literary traditions of the Western world: the Iliad, the Odyssey, and Beowulf, for example. Some of these devices common to the creation of "folk" literature are of central concern in the Grade 7 unit, The Making of Stories. The teacher of this Grade 1 unit may do well to consult the teacher packet for the Grade 7 unit mentioned if she has time and the unit is available. In addition, even though this unit stresses the oral qualities and the repetitive patterns of "folk tales," these stories contain themes and structural motifs common to a great number of succeeding stories and units. This is not to suggest that the teacher of this unit should attempt to teach first grade students to recognize "oral traditions," "repetitive patterns," or "structural motifs"; it is not to suggest that she tell them that they "better learn this stuff well" or they'll "never get through the Odyssey." It is to suggest that the teacher of this unit may perhaps teach more effectively if she understands something of the literary nature of the stories and of their place in the curriculum. Pre sumably the children will enjoy the stories; the stories will give the children some initial bits of evidence for an eventual inductive recognition of the nature of some kinds of literature; and the patterns of the stories will furnish them with some preliminary tools for their own attempts to organize their own experiences into forms that others can understand and enjoy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

The selections of this unit are included in the genre called "folk tales," primarily for the purpose of stressing the oral and repetitive devices common to the creation of folk literature. The stories could of course be called "fairy tales." They certainly could be called "fables" because they point rather obvious, simple morals, and because the speaking characters are frequently animals or such things as gingerbread boys (usually considered to be without voice). As folk tales, the stories have no single "author," but have been handed down through the generations of a particular culture.

The outstanding stylistic characteristic of the stories is, of course, the repetition of words and situations. This unit is designed to help children to perceive the function of repetition in good literature for children. In "The Little Red Hen" we hear the little hen's frequent question, "Who will help me . . . ?" and the consistent answer, " 'Not I,' said the . . . , 'Not I,' said the . . . , 'Not I,' said the . . . ," etc., and the hen's reply, "Then I will do it myself." In "The Three

Billy Goats Gruff" likewise we hear the repeated sound of the goats' feet on the bridge: "Trip-trap." The troll repeats the question, "WHO'S THAT tripping over my bridge?", to which the goat answers, "Oh! It is only I, the . . . Billy Goat Gruff; and I'm going up to the hill-side to make myself fat." The troll threatens the goat, the goat answers, etc. In "The Gingerbread Boy" we hear the little Gingerbread Boy's boast again and again:

> "I've run away from a little old woman,
> A little old man,
> And I can run away from you, I can!"

Such repetition is notable for a number of reasons. First, like the repetition in primitive poetry, it probably appeals to a very basic or "primitive" rhythmic sense. Second, it is a characteristic of folk literature undoubtedly because the repetition facilitates memory. If a story is to be handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation the factor of memory is important. Third, repetition as a structural device is important. It is amazing what even a "primitive" mind can produce when it has a form to repeat and to vary endlessly. Fourth, the constant repetition does not allow the teller of the tale to leap from the known to the unknown too quickly for a "simple" audience. Children at this level are not extraordinarily unlike primitive people in the uneducated state of their "literary" sensibilities. The children themselves might think of reasons for repetition that might not occur to adults.

The stories of the unit will also begin to build a foundation for the interpretation of stories and the recognition of motifs. In discussing "The Little Red Hen" with the children, for instance, it would probably be difficult for the teacher to prevent the children's recognizing that the little hen receives a reward (the bread) for being "good" and working hard while the other animals receive nothing because they are "bad" and lazy. They may even recognize that the Gingerbread Boy is victimized by not knowing that "pride goeth before a fall." "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" illustrates the motif of confronting and conquering a threatening monster. "The Gingerbread Boy" illustrates leaving a secure home and confronting a monster, but with a significantly different result from the billy goats' conquering of the troll. The characters, of course, as in most children's literature, are one-dimensional: they are either good or bad, with little complexity. Some of the children may have different feelings about the "goodness" or "badness," the "foolishness" or "wisdom" of the Gingerbread Boy. The children might enjoy comparing the reasons for the fates of the little hen, the troll, the goats, and the Gingerbread Boy.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. As a means of setting the scene to enjoy the stories of this unit, prepare a flannelgram for the poem "The House That Jack Built." As each character in the poem is mentioned, place that character's picture on the flannelboard. Soon the children will be able to recite the entire poem as the teacher simply points to the characters in the proper order. Explain that things will be said over and over again in the stories they will be hearing too. Invite the class to chime in with you as you read those parts of the story which repeat previous sections.

II. "The Little Red Hen"

A. Discuss "stories" and ask which ones the children know and which ones are their favorites. You might play a guessing game like this:

> I'm thinking of a story in which a little girl goes into the woods and finds a bears' home. Who knows what story I'm thinking of?
>
> I'm thinking of a story in which three little pigs go out to seek their fortunes and meet a wolf. Who knows what story I'm thinking of?

B. If the teacher has some pictures of storybook characters, she might hold them up to see if they can be identified.

C. Draw the discussion to the story of "The Little Red Hen" and tell the children that this is the story they will hear.

D. After you have read the story through once without stopping, perhaps the class's first reaction will be, "Read it again." But before you do, plan parts for the children's participation in the story. Choose a child to be the Little Red Hen, another to be the duck, another the cat, and another the dog. When these points of repetition come in the dialogue, stop reading and let the character fill in the missing conversation. Then read the story again and carry out this repetitive scheme. (When the children actually begin to write their own stories, they are very much interested in the difference between "talking" and "what goes in between." Here is an excellent opportunity to begin laying the groundwork for that distinction.)

E. The following questions are suggested for use after the second reading of the story:

1. Why did the Little Red Hen want to plant the wheat?
2. Why do you suppose the other animals wouldn't help her?

3. What did the Red Hen do with the wheat when it was ripe?
4. Where did the Little Red Hen take the wheat then? Why?
5. Then what happened to the wheat? What happened last of all?
6. How do you suppose the animals felt when they didn't get any of the bread to eat?
7. What kind of animals would you say the duck, cat and dog were?
8. What kind of animal would you say the Little Red Hen was?
9. Was it evil of the animals not to help the Little Red Hen?
10. Was it wrong of the Little Red Hen not to share her bread?

III. "The Three Billy Goats Gruff"

A. Discuss the use of repetition in "The Little Red Hen." Perhaps the class would like to do the flannelgram of "The House That Jack Built" again.

B. After reading the story through without stopping, the teacher might use questions like the following for discussion:

1. How did the story say that the troll looked?
2. How did the littlest Billy Goat Gruff's feet sound when he walked across the bridge? The middle-sized goat's? The biggest goat's?
3. Why do you suppose that the goats wanted the troll to wait for the biggest goat?
4. What were the biggest goat's two spears that he talked about? His two curling stones?
5. Who remembers the rhyme at the end of the story?
6. If the goats were people, which one would you want to be?
7. Who, in your family, would the Big Billy Goat Gruff be?

IV. "The Gingerbread Boy"[1]

A. Discuss the repetition in the two previous stories of the unit. Do as a choral reading "The House That Jack Built." Perhaps the class would like to examine the text of the storybook to see if they can pick out examples of repetition in the stories.

B. Suggest that the class listen to the new story to see if they can find the places where the characters say the same things over and over and ask them to say those parts with you.

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[1] The classical version of the story, in which the fox eats the Gingerbread Boy, is strongly recommended.

C. After the story has been read through, the following questions for discussion are suggested:

1. How do you suppose the old woman felt when the little boy began to run away?
2. What kind of a boy was this little Gingerbread Boy? Why do you think so?
3. How did the fox fool the Gingerbread Boy?
4. What character in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" is most like the fox in "The Gingerbread Boy" in that he poses a threat to others? Which one is most like the fox in that he gives another character his due?

Composition Activities

I. Oral

Reread "The Gingerbread Boy" and then have the pupils portray in free dramatization the conversation of the old woman, the old man, the Gingerbread Boy, etc. Ask some of the children to start telling one of the stories to the group, but have them make up endings of their own.

II. Written

A. "The House That Jack Built"

Have the children make up a story about a subject of their own, choosing after the repetitious pattern of "The House That Jack Built." Examples--"This is the cake that Jane baked. This is the milk that went in the cake that Jane baked. This is the cow that gave the milk that went in the cake that Jane baked. This is the man that milked the cow," etc. "This is the boat that Dick made. This is the wood that went in the boat that Dick made. This is the tree that grew the wood, this is the boy that climbed the tree," etc. The possibilities for such compositions are nearly unlimited, both in variety and in length.

B. "The Little Red Hen"

Write a group story of another animal that had to do something by himself. See if you can use the technique of repetition in this story also. As children dictate the story, the teacher should write it on the board. Later it can be copied off to go into a class booklet of original writings.

C. "The Three Billy Goats Gruff"

As the children dictate, write a group story about another family that has trouble getting somewhere, for example, a mouse family trying to get a piece of cheese and first having to meet a cat. Work on encouraging the children to add repetition in the conversations. Allow the children to illustrate the story and put it into the class story book, or allow each child to copy the story and have an individual story book to take home.

D. "The Gingerbread Boy"

Suggest that the class think of another person or animal that got fooled by someone when he left home. Have the class dictate their story to you for the original writing booklet and ask the class to illustrate it.

Language Explorations

The work of this unit stresses throughout the musical and rhythmical quality of language. Some specific work with vocabulary will undoubtedly arise during discussion of the stories. First grade children will naturally exhibit much curiosity about the meanings, sounds, and variant uses of words. The following words are suggested for specific study, among others:

troll
creaked
groaned (did the bridge really groan?)
thresh
burn (cp. "She burned the cake" and "I have a burn on my finger")

Extended Activities

I. Plan a bulletin board for the stories of the unit. It could include pictures of the stories, "new words," etc.

II. Dramatize "The Little Red Hen" by character parts to help the children understand the sequence of events. Do not expect the children to memorize a script, but let them act out the story in their own words. No props are necessary. A simple name card on each character is enough.

III. "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" may be dramatized rather differently. A large chair can serve as a bridge, with room for a "troll" beneath it. Two smaller chairs on either side can provide a hill to climb, make it easier for the children to cross, and (perhaps most important) provide more opportunity for "trip-trapping."

IV. "The Gingerbread Boy" might be depicted with a flannelgram of the story, using the children's pictures backed with flannel, felt, or sandpaper. At first, the teacher will perhaps want to read the description in the story herself. Pass out flannel figures or those made by the class and when the character speaks, the child with that character puts it on the flannelboard and does its speaking. Later on, children may even tell the background and description of the story.

POETRY:

With the exception of rhyme, perhaps the most common characteristic of children's poetry is repetition. The teacher will probably find that "poems" children compose themselves more commonly have the characteristics of repetition and rhythm than they have even of rhyme. Consequently, the teacher can find literally hundreds of poems to be used in connection with this unit to illustrate repetition, both of words and of situations. Two particularly good poems, which the children will undoubtedly already be familiar with but which they always enjoy hearing, are "Old Mother Hubbard" and "The Three Little Kittens." (Both are so readily available that no sources are listed here.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

I Know a Story (New York: Row, Peterson & Company, 1962). This book, the first reader in the Wonder-Story Books series, contains the three stories of this unit in simplified versions for first grade readers. The children may be able, and want, to read these stories sometime during the year.

Unit 2: Fanciful Tale:

LITTLE BLACK SAMBO

THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

FANCIFUL TALE:
LITTLE BLACK SAMBO
THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT
WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

CORE TEXTS:

Helen Bannerman, Little Black Sambo (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1923).

Beatrix Potter, The Tale of Peter Rabbit (New York: Frederick Warne & Co., Inc., 1961).

Maurice Sendak, Where the Wild Things Are (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963).

ALTERNATE TEXTS:

Wanda Gág, Nothing At All (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1941).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This unit deals with three excellent children's stories, two of them "classics" of modern children's literature and the third a very recent award-winning book. All three stories are remarkable for their simplicity of structure and for their near-perfect harmony between text and illustration. They are listed under the "fanciful tales" category in this curriculum primarily because they present through the medium of story and picture a child's view of the world. The plot patterns of the stories are similar: each is built upon the motif of a child leaving a secure home, meeting a monster or monsters while isolated from the protection of his home, and then returning once again to the security and love of his family. This structural motif establishes the pattern for a great number of children's stories; it even provides the basic structure for a significant number of highly sophisticated literary works. Stories as appealing as these for first grade children establish an excellent foundation for the recognition and understanding of literary patterns.

Consequently, concentrating as it does on the structural patterns of these stories, this unit has for its major objectives (1) to present fanciful stories scaled to the limits of the child's imagination, (2) to provide further experience with the familiar repetitive element of children's literature, and (3) to establish the beginnings of an ability to recognize plot elements and patterns.

The stories of this unit are closely related to the other elementary units on "fanciful stories" in their conception of the world of experience as seen through the imaginative eyes of the child. The movement from the real world to the world of fantasy in *Where the Wild Things Are* is parallel to the movement operative in such stories as *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (Grade 2 unit), *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Grade 3 "adventure" unit), *Charlotte's Web* (Grade 4), and the *Alice* stories (Grade 6). The unit is closely related to a great many other units because of its emphasis on the particular structural motif of the journey from security to isolation and the confrontation with a monster. Related units include: *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain* (Grade 1 "adventure") the Grade 2 "folk tale" unit, the Grade 4 and Grade 5 units on historical fiction, the Grade 5 "myth" unit concerning Jason and Hercules, *The Door in the Wall* (Grade 5 "other lands and people" unit), and the Grade 6 units on *A Wrinkle in Time*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Wind in the Willows*.

The establishment and reinforcement of recognition of the plot patterns leads directly into a series of secondary units, particularly the Grade 8 unit, *The Journey Novel*; and the Grade 10 unit, *Sin and Loneliness*. Because of the parts that animals play in these stories, the unit is related to the other units in the curriculum which treat the animal world as a reflection of the human world, with animals as speaking, or at least thinking, characters: that is, it is related to many of the units on folk tale, fable, myth, and animal stories. Perhaps the units most closely related to this one in all elements are the sixth grade units on Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. In *The Wind in the Willows* the animal world is a microcosm of the human world as it is in *Peter Rabbit*; the movement from reality to fantasy takes place in *Where the Wild Things Are* and *The Hobbit* with equal facility. Mole's confrontation with the "dread of the forest" in *The Wind in the Willows* is a more mysterious version of Peter's meeting with Mr. McGregor or of little Sambo's meeting with the tigers. The mysteries and monsters that Bilbo Baggins (*The Hobbit*) conquers are more terrifying than the equable monsters that Max subdues. Although the two sixth grade books add a great deal of complexity to the basic structures of the first grade books, both in language and in meaning, with satiric directions and levels of meaning accomplished through symbolism and allegory, still a surprising number of the essential elements of the stories are similar.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

Helen Bannerman was a Scotswoman stationed in India who took her children back to Scotland to be educated. On her long journey alone back to India she wrote and illustrated *Little Black Sambo*, partly to amuse her children and partly to comfort herself in their absence. The story has amused many other children since then.

Beatrix Potter first presented The Tale of Peter Rabbit in the form of a letter to the invalid five-year-old son of her former governess. She later lengthened it, illustrated it, and published it at her own expense. Following the publication of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter produced a whole series of children's books, mostly about similar adventures of similar animals, perfectly illustrated in sensitive and delicate water colors. Perhaps the most widely known of the other stories is The Tale of Benjamin Bunny (Peter's cousin who told him about cats).

Maurice Sendak was an illustrator of children's books for some time before he wrote books for children himself. Until Where the Wild Things Are, he was best known for having been the illustrator of A Hole Is to Dig. His book Where the Wild Things Are won the coveted Caldecott Medal for 1964, the award given by the American Library Association for "the most distinguished American picture book for children."

Genre

In spite of the striking dissimilarities of the stories in this unit, there are even more fundamental likenesses. The stories are built upon a "modern" conception of childhood. The stories have the simplicity of the folk tale style; they introduce animals capable of speech or at least human thought and action; they present a view of the world as the child sees it. To an adult, Mr. McGregor may appear to be a typical middle-class farmer trying to pursue his tidy life, being careful to drive such intruders as Peter Rabbit from his cabbages. But to Peter and to a child, Mr. McGregor is wildly barbaric, a truly ominous figure intent on and capable of Peter's destruction--a real monster. On the other hand, the monsters that Max encounters "with jaws that bite and claws that scratch" appear to be monstrous to adults but represent something else to most children. According to Mr. Sendak, "Max too is having fun, and not by playing hide-and-seek with Sigmund Freud. He is delighted at having conjured up his horrific beasts, and their willingness to be ordered about by an aggressive miniature king is for Max his wildest dream come true." (From the Caldecott Award Acceptance speech, printed in The Horn Book Magazine, Vol. 40, August, 1964, p. 349.

The heroes in these stories are driven by the desires and motives that children know: first, away from "home" in reaction against the restrictions of solicitous parents, in opposition to what one "ought to do"; second, back home again for food, for warmth, for security, for love. The child can sympathize with the characters. Many a child has felt the sense of dread which may come with escaping the domestic props when he hears of the frightened little rabbit trying to squeeze out where "there was no room for a fat little rabbit to squeeze." Many a child has taken an imaginary journey to a land where he can behave as he likes without being called a "wild thing" by his parents and sent to the solitary punishment of his room. Many a child has felt the bitter sense of Sambo's frustration and futility when "the cruel Tigers had taken all his fine clothes," although not many may have reacted so heroically and intelligently in an attempt to recover the beautiful things that had been taken from him. The view of the world in these stories *is* a child's view.

Style

One of the outstanding characteristics of each of the stories in this unit is the almost perfect harmony between story and picture. The picture in Beatrix Potter's book tells us what Peter's stance toward his mother's advice will be--before ever we find out from the story. The vivid colors in *Little Black Sambo* add to the dignity and to the joy of the diminutive hero and his victory. Maurice Sendak has put much of the "story" of *Where the Wild Things Are* into the expressions on the faces of Max and the monsters, so that the prose of the story is exceedingly simple and direct.

The prose of all three stories is simple, intelligent, and sensitive. Peter Rabbit is a nonchalant, pygmy-sized prodigal son; the prose which describes him is as clear and fine as its subject. The story of *Little Black Sambo* too has an effortless perfection, an "extreme simplicity" which "baffles analysis," according to May Hill Arbuthnot. The characters appear, the clothes appear, then "Sambo's walk in the jungle wearing all his 'Fine Clothes' brings out the tigers, and they take Sambo's apparel away from him and wear it in amusing and ingenious ways. How Sambo gets his clothes back and eats 169 pancakes into the bargain is certainly the best substitute for getting 'the princess and half the kingdom' ever invented for children. The formula is: extreme simplicity of language, short, cadenced sentences with enough repetition to give the pleasant rhythm little children enjoy, a plot full of mild and funny surprises, considerable suspense, and complete satisfaction at the end."[1] Although the language of *Where the Wild Things Are* is considerably less distinguished than that in the other two stories, it is difficult to find fault with it primarily because of the excellent restraint shown by the author in allowing the pictures to carry much of the weight of narration and interpretation.

The repetitive element in *Little Black Sambo* is obvious and central to the method of the telling of the story and to the plot; children who have already had the first grade "folk tale" unit will immediately recognize that it is "like" the stories of that unit. The repetition in The Tale of Peter Rabbit is not so obvious, since there is little verbal repetition, but children may comment that the plot is somewhat repetitious in that Peter has one narrow escape after another.

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[1] From *Children and Books* by May Hill Arbuthnot. Copyright © 1957 by Scott, Foresman and Company.

Structure

The most outstanding resemblance among the stories is that they are built upon the same structural motif. Although the "journeys" that Peter and Sambo undertake are "real" journeys and the "journey" that Max goes upon is entirely imaginary, the narrative patterns of the stories are all of a piece. In each, the "child" begins in the security of a loving home; in each, he wanders into the dangerous outside world; in each, he confronts monstrous creatures; and in each, the "child" escapes the monsters and returns to his home: to food and domestic care and felicity.

The differences, however, or deviations within the same general pattern, are perhaps more important. The rabbit home is a home of secure prudence; the jungle home is expansive, full of color and wild appetites and extravagances, secure in an essential joy of living; Max's home is clearly a comfortable modern home full of "protective" features, in which a young boy may frequently be "protected (or over-protected) from himself." Peter strays from prudence, and meets a monstrous Mr. McGregor who drives him back to the security of prudence, there to suffer the consequences of his imprudence. Sambo, with no suggestion of imprudence, meets the tigers, figures of the wild unknown which scare children and represent the forces which take away the colorful baubles children love. Max, in a home quite opposite to that of Sambo, a home marked by restriction rather than vitality, finds great satisfaction in becoming a tyrannical monster who "out-monsters the monsters" before his rebellion subsides into an appreciation for the love which clearly motivates the creation of the protective home environment.

There is a greater concern for "morality" in Where the Wild Things Are and the Tale of Peter Rabbit; therefore Peter and Max possess greater character complexity than does Sambo, at least so far as their motives and reactions to situations are concerned. There is some concern in these stories for how naughty little rabbits and rebellious little boys "feel." The greatest difference is that Little Black Sambo is primarily a comic work, joyous in its treatment of Sambo's home and his clothes, even comic in its treatment of the monsters. Instead of eating Sambo up, they turn into butter. The menace thus turns into a farce, into nearly a mock-heroic story compared to such a story as "Little Red Riding-Hood." Among all these differences, the essential pattern, the structural motif, remains nearly the same in these stories--a fact children can recognize (the teacher should not teach this fact directly) and use in their own compositions and in their later experiences with literature.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Little Black Sambo

A. Tell the children that they are about to hear a story about a little boy, pretty much like themselves, except that he lived in the jungle in India.

B. Read the whole story aloud at one sitting. Since the illustrations are such an important part of the story, try to arrange the class and tell the story slowly enough so that all the children can have an opportunity to see the pictures.

C. A discussion period may follow the reading.

1. Does this book sound like a true story? What parts of the story sound like things that happen to people? What parts sound like things that never happen? What parts sound like things which happen to animals?
2. Why is the story funny? What is the funniest part of the story?
3. Why did Sambo's clothes seem to please him so much?
4. Do "tigers" or "things like tigers" ever take things away from you?
5. Why did the tigers turn into butter instead of into sugar and cream?
6. Do people eat as many pancakes at your house as they did at Sambo's house? Why not?

II. The Tale of Peter Rabbit

A. Tell the children that they will hear another story about a little boy who goes away from home and gets into trouble, except that this little boy is a little boy rabbit.

B. Read the whole story aloud without stopping, once again taking care to see that all the children have time to see the excellent illustrations.

C. Discussion of the story may follow the reading.

1. Does the book sound like a true story? What parts of the story sound like things that happen to people? What parts sound

like things that never happen? What parts sound like things which happen to animals?

2. Why did Peter become frightened? What got Peter into trouble? How was Peter different from his brothers and sisters? Was Mr. McGregor at all like either Peter or the members of Peter's family?
3. Why was Peter's mother unhappy with Peter when he returned home? Some children have said that the story has a happy ending; some have said that it has a sad ending. Which kind of ending do you think it has, and why?
4. Have you ever had an experience like meeting up with Mr. McGregor?

III. Where the Wild Things Are

A. Tell the children that they will hear another story about a little boy, this time one who has been sent to bed without his supper.

B. Since the pictures in this story not only illustrate the story but carry much of the weight of the narration and interpretation, it is of special importance that all the children be given the time and the opportunity to see the pictures.

C. Discussion of text and of the vivid illustrations may interest the children after they have heard about and seen the "wild things."

1. Do you think this is a true story? Are parts of it true?
2. Did the wolf suit Max wore cause him to make mischief?
3. Do forests really grow in your bedroom?
4. Did you ever want to sail away on a boat? Why?
5. Was Max frightened at "the wild things"? Why not?
6. How did the animals act when they were terrible? When they were tamed? When they were frightened? How did they all act when the "wild rumpus" started? Do their actions show how they felt?
7. Would you have liked to be king of all "the wild things"? Why did Max send them to bed without any supper?
8. Why did Max decide to sail back home?
9. Did the story have a nice ending? How many things that happened tell us this?

Composition Activities

I. Have the children tell their own stories about a child who ran away from home and got into trouble. The stories may be group activities, or they may be dictated to the teacher or older students acting as scribes. During the composing process, try to get the children to think about what they are going to write or say before they do it. Ask the children to think about these things as they compose their stories:

A. The sequence of events. What comes first? second? third? next? last? (Children can very early develop the habit of organization of their thoughts into sequential patterns, especially if their attention has been drawn to matters of sequential organization in the stories they read.)

B. How the characters *feel.* How did Peter feel when he couldn't find the gate? when he couldn't squeeze under the door? when he had to take the camomile tea? (Children should be encouraged early to give some of their own personality and individuality to their stories, a path to the eventual development of some "style" in writing.)

Language Explorations

I. Diction

A. There are some very fine expressions in these stories which illustrate a play on descriptive words:

"the grandest tiger in the jungle"
"purple shoes with crimson soles and crimson linings"
"lippity--lippity"
"the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive"
"scr-r-ritch, scratch, scratch, scritch"

B. The children might enjoy attempting to use repetition in some description to make it more effective. They could examine the following series from *Where the Wild Things Are* and attempt to make similar patterns:

"terrible roars"
"terrible teeth"
"terrible eyes"
"terrible claws"

C. The stories are full of "action" verbs which children enjoy and like to use:

peeped
rolling and tumbling
wrangled and scrambled
whirling round
scuttered
slipped
flopped
grew and grew and grew

squeezed
rushed
to pop upon the top of Peter
wriggled
trembling
to wander about
twitched

ocean tumbled
roared
gnashed teeth
tamed
staring
blinking

Extended Activities

I. All the stories of this unit offer excellent opportunity for pictorial interpretation of the stories. Rabbits and tigers and most especially monsters make interesting subjects for children's drawings, especially when they are presented as dressed as fine or looking as ferocious as those described in these stories.

II. *Little Black Sambo*, with its numerous characters and its repetitive pattern, is excellent for dramatization. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* and *Where the Wild Things Are* would be more difficult for a group to dramatize since they depend so much upon one character, but first grade children would have a wonderful time when the "wild rumpus began."

POETRY:

Elizabeth Madox Roberts, "The Rabbit" *Time for Poetry*

(This poem presents a rather breathless picture of a small rabbit coming face to face with a child, a picture that is remarkably clear considering the brevity of the poem.)

James S. Tippett, "Sh" *Time for Poetry*

(This poem will be especially amusing to first graders, since it expresses Max's problem so well, a problem that first graders understand thoroughly.)

Harry Behn, "Adventure" *Time for Poetry*

(The sentiment of this poem, too, is one with which first graders will be thoroughly familiar. The children should see if they can apply the "meaning" of this poem to the stories in this unit.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Beatrix Potter, The Tale of Benjamin Bunny (New York: Frederick Warne & Co., Inc., 1904).
A companion volume to Peter Rabbit; Benjamin is Peter's cousin.

Marjorie Flack, Ask Mr. Bear (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932).
A cumulative story in which a small boy asks many animals what to give his mother for her birthday. Mr. Bear finally gives the best suggestion.

Unit 3: Animal Story:

MILLIONS OF CATS

ANIMAL STORY:
MILLIONS OF CATS

CORE TEXT:

Wanda Gág, Millions of Cats (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1928).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

The story for this unit, Wanda Gág's Million of Cats, is one of the immortal stories of modern children's literature. It has a perfection and simplicity of plot and language similar to that of The Tale of Peter Rabbit. The outstanding feature of the story lies in its parallel, repetitive patterns, reflected too in the curving, flowing, rhythmic lines of the author's drawings. Thus the major objectives of the unit are (1) to offer the child a charming story amid the enjoyment of rhythmic words, pictures, and patterns; and (2) to further and reinforce the ability to recognize repetitive devices and structural patterns in literature.

Millions of Cats links up with the other elementary "animal story" units, and with the units on fables concerned with talking animals illustrating "morals." The story offers a variation of the "journey" motif found in the first grade "fanciful stories" unit, the second grade "adventure" unit, etc. The story is closely related to those of many other units that also contain stories exhibiting the repetitive patterns of parallel episodes so appealing and so common in children's literature, particularly the first and second grade units on the folk tale, the first and third grade "fanciful stories" units, and the second grade "adventure story" units.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

Wanda Gág (1893-1946) grew up in a Minnesota community enriched by the culture of an immigrant society. Although she was forced to assume the duties of the head of a household when she was very young, she worked her way to an education through the publication of illustrated stories. Her stories and illustrations reveal her rich background of old world customs, superstitions, music and marchen. The rhythms of both text and picture, perfectly blended in her books, attest to the strength of the folk traditions in her background.

Genre

This story is classed in the elementary program as an animal tale, but it could easily be classed as a modern fanciful tale or as a modern fable. The elements of the fable will perhaps be most notable to the child (the fact that the animals can talk and the "moral" implication--there is a salvation in humility), since the fabulous elements will not occur to the child as strange. The fantastic time element (how long would it take to select "trillions of cats" one at a time? How long would it take them to drink a pond of water a sip at a time?) does not bother children as it does adults since the child's time sense would not allow such questions even to occur to him. Neither does the sudden denouement concern the child as it does the logically-oriented adult--how could the cats "eat each other up"? The cats are portrayed more or less as cats, but they also resemble human beings in their speech and partly in their actions. The story probably represents partly what children see in animals when they attribute human characteristics to them and partly what adults see in animals when they regard them as brutes.

Character

The human characters in the story are aged; but, as one frequently observes in children's stories, the very aged are pictured as the allies, the compatriots, the counterparts of children, perhaps because they are outside the busy activity of the mature world. The very old man going out to seek a kitten has a childlike quality--he cannot decide which cat to choose so he wants them all. When the very old woman asks him how they can possibly take care of all those cats, he replies, "I never thought of that." His journey is like the journey of a child seeking something he wants; his object is a child's prize, a kitten.

Motif

The structural motif of the story is of course the journey from home and back again, similar in some ways to the journeys of Sambo and Peter Rabbit, Red Riding-Hood, Ferdinand, Bartholomew Cubbins, and the rest. But there is little threat of violence or destruction in the story (even though "millions and billions and trillions of cats" eat each other up). An adult might think that such a great number of cats collected on one hill constituted quite a threat to life and limb, but that threat does not exist for the very old man or for the child. Even when the greatest of all possible cat fights was going on, the very old man and the very old woman went into the house, not to protect themselves from harm, but because of the great noise and because "they did not like such quarreling." The end of the story follows the structural pattern in that the home is happier, more peaceful, and perhaps even more secure than it was when the adventure began.

Style

The major element of style in the story, the repetition of words and situations, is so predominant as to become a major element of structure in the story. Outstanding of course is the formulaic repetition of the walking rhythm of "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats." The journey "over the sunny hills and down through the cool valleys" must be repeated in reverse. There is parallelism throughout the phrasing of the story and even parallelism at the level of incident.

Theme

Within the parallelism of plot and language may be some submerged thematic order, although it is probably not very important, at least as far as first graders are concerned. The speeches of the very old man, the very old woman, and the "homely" kitten seem to mirror the good and evil of the story. The little old woman, for instance, says of the millions of cats who fought over their own vanity, "It's too bad!" The very old man says of the one little frightened kitten, "Dear little kitty." But the thematic analysis only gets ridiculous if it is carried on too far. The simple moral that the humble little cat survives and becomes, at least in the eyes of the very old man, the most beautiful cat in the world while the wicked, spiteful, vainglorious cats are destroyed is the essential moralistic meaning of the story--and it is perfectly clear, even to children. The ending is completely satisfying to children--the good are rewarded, there is happiness, utter contentment, food, warmth, and a plump, soft, fluffy, beautiful kitten.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Read the entire story. The teacher should show the pictures as she reads, for the rhythmical curves in the illustrations are a pictorial analogue to the repetition in the story. Read the section dealing with the great cat fight with particular attention to proper pacing and intonation. As the teacher rereads the story, the children may wish to fill in the refrain, giving them a sense of greater involvement in the story.

II. Certain discussion topics follow rather naturally from the reading of this story.

   A. Talk about the journey of the very old man: he left home and went off by himself. When he left the house with flowers all around it, was he all alone? Was he alone when he went out over the sunny hills and down through the cool valleys? How did he feel?

B. How did the very old man feel when he saw the hill full of cats? How would you feel? Which tells you more about how the very old man felt then--the story or the picture?

C. The plot may be interpreted through a story wheel: The old man and the old woman at home; the old man going over the sunny hills and down through the cool valleys by himself; the old man finding the cats; the old man choosing the cats; the old man bringing the cats back a very long way over the sunny hills and down through the cool valleys; the problem of what to do with the cats; the solution--the great cat fight; the finding of the homely little cat; the old man and the old woman home again happy with the new kitten.

Composition Activities

I. The children could make up an oral composition, either individually or as a group, around other ways the old man and the old woman may have decided which cat or cats to keep. Or they could even think of some way for them to keep and take care of all the cats.

II. Stimulate the children's imagination by asking, "How else could the very old man have traveled?" (By magic carpet? seven-league boots? wagon drawn by thirty white mice? on a fire engine?)

III. Some children who have pet kittens at home may wish to tell stories about how they got their kittens. (Either real or imaginary stories about real or imaginary kittens will do. Imaginary stories about imaginary kittens are likely to be the most exciting.)

IV. Have the children choose a cat from the story, or a real cat that they know, or an imaginary cat, and make up phrases to describe the cat they would keep if they had to choose one from millions of cats: "the pretty soft one," "the black one with the white feet," "the one that mewed the loudest," etc. (hoping that children can be somewhat more specific and expressive than these examples). The teacher may serve as scribe and write the descriptive phrases on the chalk board or in a class booklet; or, if the children can print by this time, they might like to make little booklets themselves, printing their phrases on one page with illustrations of their cats on opposite pages.

V. The children might enjoy testing the effectiveness of the descriptions they make in the preceding activity by attempting to draw pictures of cats according to the descriptive phrases provided by another student. Each child could choose a cat (other than the one he described) to draw.

Language Explorations

I. Phonology

A. Have the children listen for the stress pattern as you repeat the refrain of the story: "Hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats." See if they can help you make up new refrains with similar patterns of strong stress: "Long-tailed dogs, short-tailed dogs, small-tailed and big-tailed and bob-tailed dogs"; "little brown cats, little black cats, little fat and little soft and little big cats"; etc. Combinations with numbers and colors should be easiest for the children.

B. Ask the children to think of other things that the very old man could have seen during his trip that begin with the same sound: "He saw cats and cows, kittens and campers, cool creeks and colorful castles."

C. Have the children see how many rhyming words they can list for key words in the story:

cat
fat
mat
hat
rat
bat

mad
bad
had
sad
lad

bed
red
said

wag
tag
bag

hill
sill
gill

II. Vocabulary

A. Draw to the children's attention the suggestive qualities of words in the story. There are good action words: trudged, bit, scratched, clawed, peeped. There are quite a number of opposites in the story: black and white, homely and pretty, thin and plump. There are several series of words with similar meanings (synonyms): thin, scraggly, and perhaps homely: beautiful and pretty; fuzzy and fluffy.

B. Children can get a broader conception of style by the use of metaphors. Have them think of ways of comparing cats in figurative speech.

Examples:

My cat was as soft as a (pillow).
The cat was as black as (night).
Our cat was as fast as __________.
as slow as __________.
as wild as __________.
as mean as __________.
as much fun as __________.
as quiet as __________.

To help the students with this kind of activity, and to acquaint them with many of the commonplace comparisons (so that in future years they can recognize them as clichés), introduce the poem "Comparisons" from the Golden Treasury of Poetry.

III. Syntax

Pick out a sentence such as: "The old man walked a long, long time." As the children attempt to change the sentence in as many ways as they can, write their results on the chalk board. Have the students attempt "transformations" of other sentences to produce sentences like:

1. "Walking along the road, the old man saw a pond."
2. "The black cat was carried all the way home by the little old man."
3. "At last he came to a hill which was quite covered with cats."

For Sentence 1, give the students the following three sentences to see how, and in what ways, they can combine them into one sentence:

(1) The man saw a pond.
(2) The man was old.
(3) The man walked along the road.

For Sentence 2, give the students the following sentences:

(1) The man carried the black cat all the way home.
(2) The man was little and old.

Extended Activities

I. Large headscarves could be used as parts of "costumes" for acting out the story. (For example, one scarf could be the very old woman's apron, another the very old man's cap, etc.) The whole class, no matter what its size, could participate in this story--there are millions of cats.

II. A flannelgram could be made up with a man, woman, home, hills, forest, and some animals different from cats. See if the children could make up parallel stories and tell them with the use of the flannelboard figures.

III. Review the journey of the very old man, perhaps by using the flannelboard with the children putting up the characters. Ask the children to keep this story in mind while you tell them a new story and see if they can find something similar in this new story. Read or tell Marjorie Flack, "Christopher," from Read-to-Me Storybook (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1947).

A. Discuss the plot of this short story. Try to draw the parallel between Christopher's walking with the children to school and the very old man's walking to find the cats. Finally, both come back to their homes.

B. Stick puppets could be made quickly and used to show the form of the plots of both stories.

IV. Again ask the children to keep these two stories in mind while they listen to Inez Bertail's "Tippy," from Read-to-Me Storybook (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1947). This story has a slightly more complicated plot than "Christopher," but its plot is basically similar. Ask the children to compare and contrast the three stories.

V. There is an excellent movie of Millions of Cats, using Wanda Gág's own drawings, which may be available through the Bureau of Audio-Visual Instruction of a local university.

POETRY:

Jane Taylor, "I Love Little Pussy" Time for Poetry

Edith H. Newlin, "Tiger-Cat Tim" Time for Poetry
(These two poems continue the consideration for the kind of loving care that the kitten in Millions of Cats received.)

Rachel Field, "The Animal Store" Time for Poetry
(This poem expresses the same kind of excessive desire for pets that leads to the little old man's choosing of all the cats.)

Edward Lear, "The Owl and the Pussycat" Time for Poetry
(This favorite poem of children may be inserted here, not simply because it is about a "pussycat," but because it contains rhythmical and rhyming patterns similar to those in Millions of Cats.)

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Marjorie Flack, Angus and the Cat (Garden City, New York: Abner Doubleday & Company, 1931).

Clare Newberry, April's Kittens (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1940).
April lives in a "one-cat apartment," and when Sheba has kittens and April wants to keep them all, life becomes complicated.

Louis Slobodkin, Millions and Millions and Millions (New York: Vanguard Press, 1955).
Pictures so precisely illustrate the verses that beginning readers can read the book with a word supplied here and there.

Unit 4: Animal Story:

HOW THE RHINOCEROS GOT HIS SKIN

THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

ANIMAL STORY:
HOW THE RHINOCEROS GOT HIS SKIN
THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD

CORE TEXT:

Rudyard Kipling, Just So Stories (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1912).

ALTERNATE TEXTS:

Jean de Brunhoff, The Story of Babar (New York: Random House, 1933).

Jack Tworkov, The Camel Who Took a Walk (New York: Aladdin Books, 1951).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This unit is the first of three units in the elementary school program based on Rudyard Kipling's Just So Stories, among the all-time favorite animal stories. The stories, embracing elements of the folk tale, the fable, the modern fanciful tale, and the myth, are primarily just for fun--fun with language, ideas, and literary forms. The stories are a veritable storehouse of the "fun things" one can do in playing with language--incremental repetition; alliteration; parallelism; onomatopoeia; humorous variations of established patterns; deliberate misunderstandings of meanings, spellings, and pronunciation of words, etc. Consequently, the major objectives of this unit are (1) to allow the children to have fun with language, forms, and ideas; and (2) to expose them to some of the humor and infinite variety, to some of the possibilities available to them as users of their own language.

These stories are of course intimately related to the second and third grade units on the Just So Stories, and somewhat less closely to most of the other animal story units in Grades one through six. The stories of this unit, in that they succeed in making a gentle spoof of elements of both the folk tale and the fable, are related to the units on the fable and folk tale throughout the elementary program. Perhaps the most important relationship between the Just So Stories treated in the first three grades and other units of the curriculum, however, is that the joyful treatment of language builds toward a fuller appreciation of the nature and possibilities of English in the same tone and general manner as is found in the works of Dr. Seuss (Grade 2 "adventure" unit), A. A. Milne (third grade unit on Winnie-the-Pooh), and the inimitable Lewis Carroll (sixth grade unit on Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass). For the very specialized genre of the "how animals got that way" stories, see the Grade 5 unit, Bidpai Fables and Jataka Tales.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

Rudyard Kipling was one of the most prominent and versatile British writers at the end of the nineteenth century. Kipling spent a good portion of his life in British colonial India, and he is best remembered for his poems and stories that portray British soldiers on duty in India and the natives and animals of the Indian jungles. While he was in India, he became familiar with the Jataka tales--native stories that resemble the fables of Western literature, but which had origins more nearly like the origins of the folk tale in Western civilization.

Genre

The Jataka tales frequently told of the origins of certain jungle animals and their characteristics, usually within a "wise beast--foolish beast" plot structure with the animals playing speaking parts in order to teach moral lessons. In the Just So Stories, written especially for children, Kipling imitates the pattern of the Jatakas. Consequently, the specific genre of the Just So Stories is difficult to fix; perhaps the best one can do is to call the stories "animal" stories(as we have done in this unit)and discuss the similarities and differences between these stories and other more firmly established genres.

Part of the difficulty arises because of the rollicking mood of the telling; the tales are told in such a way that it is obvious they are at least partly parodies, satiric renditions of other forms. Kipling's Just So Stories are "mock-folk tale" in much the same way that the "mock-epic" is an imitation of the epic for purposes of satire and parody. That is, his stories play with the conventions of the folk tale partly to make fun of the conventions, partly to mock the folk imagination, partly to satirize the characters in the tale, but most of all to have fun with the reader or listener in a good healthy way. The tales are a take-off on the folk tales which students have previously met and on the myths which they will later meet. The stories also prepare students to read other kinds of works which manipulate standard literary forms for amusing purposes. Although students will not be able to verbalize much at this level about such subtle literary techniques, they are likely to feel the gaiety and excellence of the stories. The fanciful ("magical") quality of the stories renders the humor much more affable.

Motif

Some structural elements of the two stories, "How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin" and "The Elephant's Child," are similar; but the stories are a good deal different. "How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin" is built upon the "foolish beast" fable pattern: it appears at first that the foolish beast will get the best of the Parsee, but he receives his come-uppance at the end. The pattern of "The Elephant's Child" is closer to the common folk tale motif of the journey into isolation, the confrontation with the monster, and the triumphant return. The home the Elephant's Child leaves is not directly hostile to him, his "families" care enough about him to try to keep his curiosity from getting him into trouble; but he certainly dislikes all the spankings he gets. The story reaches a happy conclusion when the feared "evil" of his curiosity turns into a blessing in disguise which enables him to reap his reward, although not without suffering a good deal in the process.

Style

The stylistic features of these stories stand out as the most significant characteristics of the unit. According to May Hill Arbuthnot, these stories were meant "to be read aloud. They are cadenced, rhythmic, and full of handsome, high-sounding words, which are both mouth-filling and ear-delighting. It isn't necessary to stop and explain every word. The children will learn them, even as they learn 'Hey diddle, diddle,' and the funny meanings will follow the funny sounds, gradually. The mock-serious tone of these pseudo-folk tales adds to their humor."[1]

Both stories are full of repetition, both repetition of situation and repetition of words. The repetition of incident helps to unify and to structure the stories, but the real delight in the stories is the treatment of language. A child who has heard "The Elephant's Child" read skillfully will not soon forget the "great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever trees." The rhythmic attraction of the series increases with each repetition. The "great grey-green, greasy" phrase is only one example from a flood of alliterative phrases. The assonance of the phrase too, is only one example from a great many, perhaps rivalled among the group only by the "scalesome, flailsome tail" of the magnificently pompous Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake. In these stories, especially in "The Elephant's Child," Kipling has nearly as much fun with the English language as one can imagine to be possible.

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[1] From Children and Books by May Hill Arbuthnot. Copyright © 1957 by Scott, Foresman and Company.

The children will probably notice one stylistic device of these stories immediately: the narrator is a real personality speaking to a real listener. In the other stories the children have heard in the first grade, the narrator remains completely impersonal; but the *Just So Stories* are told in a convincing story-telling manner. The stories derive much of their peculiar effectiveness from this personal, conversational narrative technique.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. "How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin"

A. It is possible that after the teacher reads the story to herself she may wish to present the class with a selected group of words for explanation, perhaps only those words or phrases which might affect the meaning of the story and which might disturb the pacing of the reading. The teacher may wish to explain some of the words during the reading, but many of the words that present obstacles to the adult may *not* present obstacles to the children since the "sound effect" is frequently much more important than the meaning.

1. For possible explanation before the reading:

uninhabited
Rhinoceros
Parsee
island
the Red Sea
Uninhabited Interior

2. For possible explanation during the reading:

Superior Comestible
a waterproof
desolate
oriental splendor

Note: Because of the emphasis on word play in these stories, the teacher should beware of taking liberties with the vocabulary of the stories. The stories should be read just as they are written; consequently, the teacher must read the stories over enough times to become thoroughly familiar with the language.

B. Read the story aloud, making the most of the sounds and rhythms. The musical sounds are sometimes difficult at first; perhaps the teacher should practice. The explanation of terms during the reading of the story should not be so extensive as to alter the pace of the presentation and lose the children's interest.

C. A group discussion may follow to bring out particular characteristics of the story.

1. (Parallel incidents) What happened the first time the Rhinoceros came from the Uninhabited Interior? the second time he came?

2. (Verbal repetition) What are the words which describe the Parsee's hat? What words tell what the Rhinoceros did when he tried to get the crumbs out from under his skin? What words did you enjoy hearing over and over again?

3. Where was there magic in the story? Tell about parts you thought were magic. When was the Rhinoceros acting like an animal? when like a human being?

4. (Moral) Why did the Parsee put crumbs in the Rhinoceros' skin? Do you think he should have done that? Why?

II. "The Elephant's Child"

A. Once again the teacher may wish to select some words for particular explanation, but once again remember that the "sound effects" of words and phrases are frequently more important than the meaning, especially in this story, and especially to a child.

Suggested list:

1. For explanation before the reading:
   Africa
   ostrich
   giraffe
   hippopotamus
   baboon
   crocodile
   python

2. For explanation during the reading:
   'satiable curiosity (insatiable curiosity)
   Kolokolo Bird
   astonished
   promiscuous
   floundered
   'vantage

B. Read the story aloud, making the most of the sounds and rhythms. The explanation of terms during the reading of the story should not be so extensive as to alter the pace of the presentation and lose the children's interest.

C. A group discussion may follow to bring out particular characteristics of the story.

The children will probably notice one stylistic device of these stories immediately: the narrator is a real personality speaking to a real listener. In the other stories the children have heard in the first grade, the narrator remains completely impersonal; but the Just So Stories are told in a convincing story-telling manner. The stories derive much of their peculiar effectiveness from this personal, conversational narrative technique.

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A. It is possible that after the teacher reads the story to herself she may wish to present the class with a selected group of words for explanation, perhaps only those words or phrases which might affect the meaning of the story and which might disturb the pacing of the reading. The teacher may wish to explain some of the words during the reading, but many of the words that present obstacles to the adult may not present obstacles to the children since the "sound effect" is frequently much more important than the meaning.

1. For possible explanation before the reading:

uninhabited
Rhinoceros
Parsee
island
the Red Sea
Uninhabited Interior

2. For possible explanation during the reading:

Superior Comestible
a waterproof
desolate
oriental splendor

Note: Because of the emphasis on word play in these stories, the teacher should beware of taking liberties with the vocabulary of the stories. The stories should be read just as they are written; consequently, the teacher must read the stories over enough times to become thoroughly familiar with the language.

B. Read the story aloud, making the most of the sounds and rhythms. The musical sounds are sometimes difficult at first; perhaps the teacher should practice. The explanation of terms during the reading of the story should not be so extensive as to alter the pace of the presentation and lose the children's interest.

1. Did you like this story? Why?

2. (Parallel incidents) What was it that made the Elephant's Child ask so many questions? Of whom did he ask these questions?

3. (Repetition) What words or groups of words do you recall hearing over and over again? Which ones do you like best? Why?

4. What makes the two stories alike? What makes them different?

Composition Activities

A parallel story, dictated either individually or by the group, about how some other animal got the way he is should come easily.

Why Crows Are Black
Why Raccoons Have Rings on Their Tails
How Ducks Got Webbed Feet
What Happened to the Guinea Pig's Tail
etc.

Language Explorations

The possibilities for language activities in connection with these stories are limited only by the ingenuity of the teacher and the interests and abilities of the students. Many of the humorous manipulations Kipling makes with language are of course beyond the understanding of first grade children, but there are some specific activities the children should be capable of.

I. Children can have fun experimenting with words and sounds by pretending to be the crocodile and, keeping the teeth clamped shut, repeating such sentences as, "I think today I will begin with Elephant's Child," or "I'm going to eat you up." Then they can be the elephant and, holding their noses, repeat sentences such as "Led go! You are hurtig be," and "This is too butch for me."

II. An Alliterative phonology game:

1. Tell children to think of a color.
2. Then think of a thing that begins with the same sound.
3. Next add an action word beginning with the same sound.

Examples:

blue	balloon	blows
pink	pie	pops
red	rabbit	runs
purple	pig	pulls
yellow	yak	yawns

4. After color names are exhausted use numbers.

six	soldiers	sat
ten	tubs	tipped
five	fish	flopped

Extended Activities

I. Puppetry for "The Elephant's Child" could introduce children to a fascinating way of "dramatizing" stories.

II. Pictures and stories about jungle animals might show children similarities and differences between Kipling's presentation of animals and other descriptions of them.

III. Create hats that the Parsee might wear in different kinds of weather.

POETRY:

Georgia Roberts Durston, "The Hippopotamus" — Time for Poetry
(A good description of another jungle animal.)

Rhoda W. Bacmeister, "Galoshes" — Time for Poetry
(The use of words to imitate specific sounds; good use of onomatopoeia and alliteration.)

Ogden Nash, "The Rhinoceros" — The Golden Treasury of Poetry
(Another "fun" description of a jungle animal.)

HOLDING HANDS
by
Lenore M. Link

Elephants walking
Along the trails

Are holding hands
By holding tails.

Trunks and tails
Are handy things

When elephants walk
In Circus rings.

Elephants work
And elephants play

And elephants walk
And feel so gay.

And when they walk--
It never fails

They're holding hands
By holding tails.

(This poem has some of the lilting rhythm of the Just So Stories, and it suggests some things the Elephants could do with their new long noses.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Roger Duvoisin, Petunia (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1950).
Petunia is a very curious goose whose curiosity parallels that of the Elephant's Child. An excellent book for first graders.

Else H. Minarik, Little Bear (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957).
Could be read independently by some first graders.

Unit 5: Animal Story:

THE STORY OF FERDINAND

ANIMAL STORY:
THE STORY OF FERDINAND

CORE TEXT:

Munro Leaf, The Story of Ferdinand (New York: The Viking Press, 1936).

ALTERNATE TEXT:

James Daugherty, Andy and the Lion (New York: The Viking Press, 1938).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

The charming animal story by Munro Leaf about a bull who is apparently unlike other bulls forms the subject of this unit. This story has the magical quality of being told from the point of view of the bull; it is truly an "animal story" within the context of this curriculum. The major concept of the story rests upon a variation of the journey motif so common in children's literature. Consequently, the objectives of the unit are: (1) to present an animal story which has human overtones; (2) to present a story with an original variation on the motif of encountering a monster during a journey; (3) to present a story of humorous exaggeration as a model for supplementary reading and writing; and (4) to present a story with illustrations that make the young student aware of satiric intentions.

Being a sympathetic story dealing with an animal, the story of the unit is closely related to the other "animal story" units in the elementary program, in its manner of speaking from the desires of the animal perhaps most closely related to the third grade unit on The Blind Colt and the fourth grade unit on Brighty of the Grand Canyon. The humor of the sympathetic treatment of animals recalls Kipling's Just So Stories, the subject of first, second, and third grade units; A. A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh, in a third grade unit; and Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows, in a sixth grade unit. First graders would not find it difficult to draw the parallel between the serene individualism of Ferdinand and that of the hero of Crow Boy, the subject of the second grade "other lands" unit. Children will enjoy recognizing that the structural motif varies from the more usual pattern found in the other units which use the journey-from-home-to-monster-to-home motif. The gently satiric tone of the story forms a good basis for the more intensive and sophisticated satiric units of the curriculum from the Just So Stories and The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins through

Winnie-the-Pooh, Alice in Wonderland, and The Wind in the Willows to the formal studies of satire in the secondary units.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Motif

This is the story of an animal who does not live up to the characteristics usually attributed to his kind. Ferdinand, a bull, acts in a most un-bull-like way throughout this short humorous story. Although the story is basically patterned as many children's tales are, it has a highly individual, even unique, way of treating the pattern. It is true that Ferdinand lives in a secure home with an understanding mother and is happy. It is also true that he leaves his secure home to venture into an unknown and mysterious world. However, Ferdinand does not leave his home for any personally compelling reason. As a young bull he has not engaged in the lively buttings and battles of the other young bulls. Instead, he has sat under his pleasant cork tree enjoying the sweet odors of flowers. When the men come and take him to Madrid to appear in the bull ring, he goes gently. It is the idea of others and not of Ferdinand that he venture into the mysterious world of Madrid and the bull ring. A full-blown monster might have developed in the characters of the Banderilleros, the Picadors, and the Matador; but without opposition--without a really "bully" bull--their "monster" potential is lost. His own innocence and gentleness protect Ferdinand like angels. There is nothing for the men to do but to take him home again. Ferdinand's education is nil: nothing has touched him really, in no way does he change. Our last glimpse shows him sitting under his cork tree, sniffing the flowers, and "He is very happy."

Character

Ferdinand and his mother are given some of the characteristics of human beings--better human beings, of course, than the five men who take Ferdinand to Madrid. Unlike an uninitiated human being, however, who might easily be caught up in the excitement of Madrid and the bull ring, Ferdinand is wise. He remains completely true to his liking for flowers and his lack of interest in fighting. In a sense he is a morally superior being. However, one should not make too much of this matter of Ferdinand's making moral choices even if the implication is there.

Structure

The story is really a comedy of surprises. Just as Ferdinand is surprised when he sits on the bumblebee and cavorts in a completely un-Ferdinand-like way, so the young reader will be surprised to read a story about a young bull who asserts none of the characteristics children usually attribute to such creatures but is happier just smelling flowers. The end of the story is a surprise too. After a somewhat calm and deliberate telling, the tale stops almost immediately when it is apparent that Ferdinand will not fight. There is an especially comic effect when the Matador weeps. By his gentleness Ferdinand has denied the Matador the role he would enact. When the Matador cannot perform his ritual, he is reduced to nothing. The story, like other children's stories of this century, has a "softened" (but completely satisfying) ending.

Style

Munro Leaf has told this tale in a style compatible with his purpose for it. He has spaced his sentences--often only one on a page--and for special emphasis he has occasionally placed only a part of a sentence on a page. This deliberate spacing of sentences plus the use of rather slow-moving compound sentences serves to reflect the serenity and gentleness characteristic of most of the story. They also keep pace with the numerous black-and-white drawings of Robert Lawson. Mr. Leaf writes tongue-in-cheek; yet his style seems completely objective. Even his use of print makes its point, especially in the passage opposite the picture of the immense gates into the bull ring. The type size change shows the innocence and shy nature of the hero. There is gentle satire when Leaf writes a passage such as the one showing the fear of all the performers, directed toward the "fierce" Ferdinand. There is an element of repetition used in the story, repetition not as obvious as that of some children's stories. But from time to time we return to the line telling of Ferdinand's love for his cork tree and his flowers.

Illustration

The pictures by Robert Lawson enhance the tale, for the artist has caught the gently satiric intent of the story and has transmitted this spirit subtly and well. The picture of the four young bulls gazing at the poster advertising the bull fights in Madrid is a case in point. The careful observer will see that the bull at the right has one leg bandaged and several small pieces of adhesive tape applied to his flank. The picture of the five men reveals them to be among the least noble of mankind. And in several pictures there are what appear to be vultures hovering about. The cork trees with their unrealistic clusters of bottle corks, as children might visualize them, are an amusing touch.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. The teacher might arouse the children's interest prior to reading the story by introducing them to Ferdinand's world: the beautiful Spanish countryside. The teacher might tell the students something of the cork trees, the old ruins, the peaceful valleys and rugged mountains that characterize the country and the illustrations of the book. The teacher should perhaps introduce the subject of bullfighting, but only insofar as it is necessary to the children's understanding of the general subject of the story. It would be wise to avoid the specific details of occurrences in the ring during an actual bullfight, if possible. The treatment of the whole subject should be as superficial and humorous as is the treatment in Lawson's illustrations. The characters in the story, both the really "bully" bulls and the matador and his stage hands, are so ludicrous that they do not appear evil, or even very dangerous.

What is important to the story is that it is a story about a "hero" who does not act as he is expected to act. The teacher should explain that Ferdinand is a bull who does not act as other bulls. She should suggest that the children might tell her what they think are the characteristics of bulls. It would be well to keep a list of the words the children use to describe the characteristics of bulls to compare with the words Munro Leaf uses to describe really "bully" bulls and the words he uses to describe Ferdinand. After the fierceness of bulls becomes established, the teacher should ask the children to notice as they listen to the story whether Ferdinand acts like the kind of bulls they have seen or have heard about.

II. The teacher should have read the story through several times so that she is thoroughly familiar with its pace and prepared to give it a good reading. In almost all parts the story should be read deliberately, somewhat on the slow side since this is the manner in which the story proceeds. Only those passages which deal with the antics of the young bulls, with the festive appearance of Madrid, and the drama of the bull ring should be read at a faster pace.

Since the sentences of the story are especially well spaced, the teacher can read the story and show the children the pictures at the same time. And since the pictures are an integral part of the story, they should be shown as the story is read.

The teacher should read the story through completely without any long stops. The children should have a chance to feel the form of the story as well as to learn its setting and plot and become acquainted with its characters.

III. A group discussion of story and pictures may follow the reading of the story.

1. Where does the story take place? What are some of the words which tell us where the story occurs? Do the pictures tell us anything about this?
2. Was Ferdinand different from the other young bulls? How does he show these differences?
3. What words tell what kind of bull Ferdinand is? What words tell what kind of bulls the other young bulls wanted to be?
4. Was Ferdinand really lonely? Why do you think he was, or wasn't?
5. Was Ferdinand always happy? Were the other bulls happy?
6. How did Ferdinand's mother treat him? Do you think she was a wise mother?
7. When the five men in funny hats arrived, what was it that caused them to think Ferdinand was a ferocious bull? Do you think a bull would really act this way if he was stung by a bumblebee?
8. How did the other bulls feel when the men chose Ferdinand to take to Madrid? Is there any indication of how Ferdinand felt?
9. How did Ferdinand feel when he was riding to Madrid in the cart? Does the picture show you how he felt?
10. How did Ferdinand act when he entered the bull ring? How did the people think he would act?
11. What effect did his failure to act as he was expected to have on the Banderilleros, the Picadors, and the Matador? How do you think the people at the bull fight felt?
12. What does this story tell about what it takes to have a fight?
13. What do you suppose the author is suggesting to us by having Ferdinand enjoy sitting under the cork tree and smelling flowers rather than having him enjoy fighting?
14. What funny things did you notice in the pictures?

Composition Activities

I. Children might enjoy dramatizing one scene of the story, making up their own dialogue for it.

II. Some children might try to write a dialogue between Ferdinand and his mother in which Ferdinand explains (a) about his ride in the cart to Madrid, (b) how the city looked, and (c) what went on in the bull ring.

III. Some children might compose a story about another kind of animal who does not act as he is traditionally thought to act: a cowardly lion, a wide-awake possum, a foolish owl, a cooperative mule, etc.

Language Explorations

I. Concept development

Because of the Spanish words in this story and the humorous treatment some of them receive, this is a good time to make children aware of the fact that English is not the only language in the world. The children might make a list of other languages they know about, of words from other languages, or at least sing some songs (many children know *Frère Jacques* or *O Tannenbaum*). The children might be led to the conception that English is not even necessarily the best language for everybody, that each language is quite adequate for most purposes for the people who use it.

II. Morphology

If the children are familiar with the concept of plural and singular in language, the teacher might begin to interest the children by showing them the two-page picture which serves as a frontispiece of the book. She might point out the spelling of the words "El Toro Ferocio," and "Ferdinando," and mention that these appear to be foreign words. Children might guess what language they are. Then the teacher could explain that they are Spanish and that the "o" endings are characteristic. Then she could tell the children to notice the words at the bottom of the picture: "Matadoros - Picadoros - Humidoros - Hot Dogos - Chocolate Baros". She should ask them to guess what the "s" signifies at the end of each of these expressions. After the children have guessed that they are plural endings, she might ask them to decide which words look like English words. When the children have discovered *dogos* and *baros*, she can tell them this is the artist's way of being humorous. She should then translate the Spanish words so that the children will see why the last words are there for humorous purposes (The Fierce Bull, Ferdinand, Matadors, Picadors, Cigars).

The teacher could move from a recognition of the humorous Spanish forms to indicate the regular way of forming plurals in English; from there perhaps even some of the variant ways of forming plurals in English might be considered.

"dogos"	dogs	bull	bulls
"baros"	bars	flower	flowers
Matadoros	matadors	horn	horns
Picadoros	picadors	fight	fights
Banderilleros	banderilleros.	hat	hats
		man	men

III. Syntax

Choose some of the simpler sentences from the story by Munro Leaf and print them word by word on large cards or on pieces of paper, with one word on each piece of paper. Let the children stand in the correct positions to form the sentence that the author wrote, and then let them attempt to arrange the words to see how else the author could have written the same sentence.

IV. Vocabulary

Compare the lists of describing words that were used (see Literature Presentation: I) to indicate the usual characteristics of bulls with the ones that were used in the story to describe Ferdinand and the other young bulls. Perhaps the idea of some of the words meaning opposite things as well as different words meaning about the same thing will crop up.

Extended Activities

Have the children look for other books in which animals act in a manner opposite to that which people expect of them, stories of cats who are afraid of mice, of ducks afraid of water, of friendly ghosts, of stupid foxes, cooperative mules, etc.

POETRY:

Christopher Morley, "Smells (Junior)"	Time for Poetry

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

I. Other stories of a Spanish flavor:

Ruth Sawyer, Picture Tales From Spain (Philadelphia: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1936).

Lois Lenski, Papa Small (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951).

Eugene Fern, Pepito's Story (New York: Ariel Books, 1960).

II. Other humorous animal stories:

Emmy Payne, Katy No-Pocket (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1944).

Louise Fatio, The Happy Lion Roars (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. [Whittlesey House], 1957).

Unit 6: Adventure Story:

LITTLE TIM AND THE BRAVE SEA CAPTAIN

ADVENTURE STORY:
LITTLE TIM AND THE BRAVE SEA CAPTAIN

CORE TEXT:

Edward Ardizzone, Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain (London: Oxford University Press, 1955).

ALTERNATE TEXT:

Edward Ardizzone, Tim to the Rescue (New York: Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1959).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain introduces first graders to stories of realistic adventure. To say that a story is "realistic" in the sense that Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain is realistic is not to suggest that the story is not imaginative; such "realism" does not have to contain only elements with a high degree of probability. "Realistic" stories for children like the Little Tim stories must have no suggestion of "magical" elements: there are no talking animals, there are no good or bad fairies, there are no rides on magic carpets, etc. The adventures of the hero are set within a "real" world with "real" people, "real" ships, "real" storms on a "real" sea, and the actions of the characters are actions which children can accept as capable of occurring with no great imaginative "extension of disbelief."

Like most good writers, Mr. Ardizzone achieves an understanding of the character of his hero and a great deal of sympathy for his hero; but, like most adventure stories, the principal concern of this unit is to treat the development and the conception of the plot, or the "action," of an adventure story. The first requisite of a good story for children is that "something happens"; children are hardly at all concerned with psychological quirks of character and character development or with intricacies of description or unity of structure or moral cohesion, etc., although these elements do have definite effect on the young reader. The objectives of this unit are (1) to provide children with a highly imaginative adventure story which is high quality literature; (2) to allow the children to experience vicariously the thrills of Tim's sea voyage and all his exciting experiences; and (3) to develop and reinforce the student's conception of plot structures and plot development.

The theme of this unit builds directly through other elementary units (such as The Bears on Hemlock Mountain, Grade 2; Homer Price, Grade 4; King of the Wind and Robin Hood, Grade 5; Big Red and The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Grade 6) toward the fuller understanding of narrative plot techniques treated in secondary units (The Making of Stories, Grade 7; nearly all of the eighth grade units, especially The Epic Hero; The Epic: The Odyssey, Grade 9; The Leader and the Group, Grade 10; and the Grade 12 units, Shakespearean Tragedy and The Christian Epic). The units on the epic should be especially helpful to the teacher of this unit, since the "little.Odyssey" character of Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain is intended to build directly toward an understanding of the epic form in literature. The teacher may also find helpful the lectures by Mr. Olson and Mr. Gettmann in the original manual A Curriculum for English (Nebraska Council of Teachers of English, Woods' Charitable Fund Workshop, 1961) on the characteristics of epic literature (or the epic characteristics of literature). This unit, too, because of the "realistic" nature of its material and its qualities of "adventure," ties closely to the elementary and secondary units on historical fiction and biography. Because it is a story of the sea, it is especially close to the third grade unit on Christopher Columbus and His Brothers, the fourth grade unit on Leif the Lucky (who, like Tim, serves his apprenticeship on the sea as a very young boy), and the sixth grade unit on Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Genre

Although this might be called a wish-fulfillment story, Tim's adventures at sea are more realistic than romantic. Before going to sea Tim longs for the chance, gazing at the ships, proudly identifying the various kinds he sees. He looks upon the sea and the life of a sailor romantically. The story, however, teaches Tim that life at sea can mean hard work, that days may be routine with simply a series of jobs to be done, and that life on the sea can be dangerous too--that a boy may lose his life when a ship founders on the rocks. The story is also one of maturation. When Tim is willing to go to sea again as this story closes, he is a much wiser lad and makes his decision in the light of his really hard experiences.

Theme

The author makes little of the fact that Tim originally used deceit to get to sea; he does not descend to platitudinous moralizing by connecting the ship's disaster with Tim's minor dishonesty. Tim and the captain have acted bravely; yet in one sense Tim has not been an active hero. He is unwittingly left behind on the sinking ship, the captain gives him courage, and the lifeboat rescues the two. However, small children may view Tim as a hero because he was able to stop his crying even in the face of imminent drowning. Perhaps his greatest exhibition of heroism comes when he accepts the hard work without complaint. Tim as hero in Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain is not so clearly delineated as is Tim as hero in Tim to the Rescue, another of Mr. Ardizzone's books for children.

Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain will appeal to children, who will regard Tim as a hero because he is able to hold his own in an adult world, to accept the hard work assigned him, to ask no favors, and even to face death bravely.

Motif

The pattern of this story is that of a child leaving a secure home, moving into an unknown world where he encounters the monster (in this story, the captain), overcoming the monster (by hard work and persistence Tim wins his way into the favor of the captain,who forgives him for stowing away), and finally, after one last horrifying adventure with the unknown (the storm at sea and the sinking vessel), returns to his secure home and is accepted seriously by his parents. There is very little emphasis, however, on the secure home: rather the journey itself and the fantastic experiences are the main interests of the story.

Style

Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain is told in a straightforward style. The story is simple rather than subtle, moves rapidly, reaches its climax quickly, and concludes satisfactorily. The adult reader may be somewhat amused by the fact that Tim's parents are not at the station to meet him when Tim returns from his terrifying experience and rescue: they meet him and the captain at the garden gate instead, a suggestion of the restraint more common in British than in American parents. The pictures painted by Mr. Ardizzone, needless to say, enhance the story greatly; in fact, some teachers may feel that they are more moving than the tale itself.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Before reading the story, discuss the title, the name of the author, and the setting with the children. Show them the larger pictures, the ones which they are able to see as a group sitting around the teacher. By questioning, get the children to see the action in the pictures. Ask them how certain pictures make them feel, especially those which show the magnitude of the sea and the smallness of the ships on it.

Tell the children that all the pictures are so interesting that they should get the book in free time and look at all of them. Once you begin, you should read the story through. The teacher should give the children a chance to enjoy the story thoroughly by reading it at least twice (but not twice on the same day).

II. Note: If the teacher can arrange to read the story twice, the discussion should probably follow the second reading rather than the first. Before reading the story the second time, ask the children to listen for these things:

1. How did Tim feel about the ships and the sea?
2. How did Tim manage to stay aboard the steamer after his visit?
3. How do you think the captain felt after he discovered Tim?
4. How did Tim feel about having to scrub the deck?

III. Discuss the observations the children can make about the questions you asked them to consider as you were reading the story. As you discuss the story with the children, try to help them informally to discover the "development of plot" in the story. Help them to see that the story opens calmly, that the action begins once Tim is aboard the ship, that the action intensifies as the storm hits, that the rescue is the highest point of interest, and that the story then concludes happily. Encourage them to tell in their own words the central idea (theme) of the story. The following questions may provoke further discussion.

1. How can you tell from the story that Tim was especially fond of boats?
2. How did Tim's parents feel about his asking to go to sea?
3. Why did the captain become so angry when he discovered Tim? Was he justified? Why?
4. Was it fair for Tim to have to work so hard for his passage?
5. At what place in the story do you think the captain changed his mind about Tim? What made the captain change his mind?
6. Why was the captain still on the ship after the others had left?
7. What does the treatment of Tim by his parents at the end of the story tell about how they have changed from the time Tim first asked them to allow him to go to sea?
8. What made Tim's parents change their minds?
9. Do you like the way the story ended? Can you think of other ways the story might have ended?

Composition Activities

I. Have the children retell the story to see if they can follow the sequence:

What came first?
What came next?
What came next (etc.)?
What happened last?

II. Give children an opportunity to make up their own stories modeled on the sequence of this story: wanting to do something very much but not being taken seriously by their parents, getting the chance to do what they liked, the unpleasant consequences of having their own way, the way their parents forgave them after their experience.

III. Ask the children to see if they can make up another adventure about Tim.

IV. The class as a whole might work together to combine all their original adventures for Tim into one adventure story. The class would have to work very hard to sort events out in the right order.

Language Explorations

I. Have the children use the following words in sentences of their own making: boatman, captain, mayor, lifeboat.

II. Discuss with the children the meaning of these words: launch, resolved Davey Jones' locker, voyage, stowaway, quay, moored. Use them in various sentences to see if the children can detect their meanings.

III. Dialect

Discuss the meanings of specific terminology or speech characteristics that appear in the story. Interesting possibilities include types of sailing vessels, their gear, the weather, the speech of sailors and captain, etc.

IV. Select a sentence from the story, such as "In the middle of the night there was a terrible crash." Write the sentence on the chalk board or on chart paper. Ask the pupils in what other ways this same idea could be stated. Record the responses. The examples given by the children might include the following:

There was a terrible crash in the middle of the night.
About midnight there was a loud noise.
Tim heard a terrible crash about midnight.

This language activity will enable the pupils to experiment with language and note the different ways in which words are combined to make sentences, and the manner in which we can reorganize words to secure a particular style.

Extended Activities

I. Since Ardizzone's drawings are so full of vitality, the children might like to make scenes of parts of the story which they think are particularly exciting. The pictures could be combined into a mural. The students would have to consider what order to put the pictures in to tell the story properly.

II. The children might like to make a series of drawings to illustrate the series of adventures they have made up for Tim. Once again, the class would have to manage the order of the illustrations.

III. Children might enjoy hearing the song "Sailor Men" or hearing a recording of sounds of the sea.

IV. The basic consideration of this unit is the presentation of the Odyssey-like adventure, a concept presented to the children for the first time in this unit. Since this is a new and very important concept in the curriculum, this unit should probably not become too crowded with extraneous material.

POETRY:

Rachel Field, "Whistles" — Time for Poetry
(This poem can communicate even to very young children some of the wanderlust that affected Tim.)

Robert Louis Stevenson, "At the Seaside"
and "A Good Play" — Time for Poetry
(These poems are concerned with some of the "play" associated with the sea and the shore. The rhythms imitative of the sea may be effective.)

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Additional stories which may be read by the teacher:

Edward Ardizzone, Tim in Danger (London: Oxford University Press, 1953).

Margaret Wise Brown, The Runaway Bunny, ill. by Clement Hurd (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942).

Golden MacDonald (pseudonym of Margaret Wise Brown), *Little Lost Lamb* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1945).

Dori Furth, *Back in Time for Supper* (New York: David McKay Co., 1947).

Lois Lenski, *The Little Sail Boat* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937).

Hetty Burlingame Beatty, *Voyage of the Wind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959).

Melvern Barker, *Shipshape Boy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961).

Unit 7: Adventure Story:

THE LITTLE ISLAND

ADVENTURE STORY:
THE LITTLE ISLAND

CORE TEXT:

Golden MacDonald (ill. by Leonard Weisgard), The Little Island (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1946).

ALTERNATE TEXT:

Roger Duvoisin, The House of Four Seasons (New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Company, 1956).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

At first glance, The Little Island is a much different sort of book from the other books that are placed in the first grade program. The "plot" of the story is distinctly subordinate to the "exposition" that presents the facts of experience that a child can observe in the "life" of a little island. The book is a book of realistic experience intended to stimulate the sensory perceptions and awareness of young children. As such, it has the elements of a nature study rather than a "story," but there is a story in the "adventure" of life that a little island leads and in the growing in wisdom of a little kitten. The objectives of the unit are (1) to introduce to the children an adventure story about nature on an island; (2) to develop a sense of how a literary artist handles the cyclical patterns of nature in describing the changing seasons; (3) to develop the student's awareness of the possibility of using vivid images in language; (4) to develop an understanding of the literary use of analogies between the human and the animal world; and (5) to introduce to the children a book which very simply and clearly contains more than one level of meaning--some of the rudiments of symbol and theme.

The Little Island exhibits the curiously close kinship between subject matter and theme that so often occurs in books that deal with nature. In such books there is so often an apparent isolation of an individual but an actual recognition of the community and interdependence of all life. This marriage of the subject matter concerning nature and the theme of the unity of life is especially expressed in a number of the elementary "myth" units; in the first grade unit on Crow Boy; the third grade unit on The Blind Colt; units on Island of the Blue Dolphins and The Door in the Wall; and in sixth grade units on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Wind in the Willows. The relationship between the theme of isolation on an island and the kinship of all nature is especially strong in this unit and in Island of the Blue Dolphins and Tom Sawyer, so that the teacher of this unit may find some helpful information in those units for the teaching of this one. The cyclical pattern of life and death in nature is beautifully expressed in Charlotte's Web, a fourth grade unit. The teacher should also know well, if possible, the theoretical background material from the Grade 7 unit, The Meaning of Stories so she will know where a consideration of the various levels of meaning should lead the student. The unit builds quite definitely too toward the Grade 10 units, Man's Picture of Nature and Sin and Loneliness.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

"Golden MacDonald" is a pseudonym used by Margaret Wise Brown, a most prolific writer of children's books. She wrote a great many books designed to inform children about the natural phenomena of the world, appealing to the child's natural sense of curiosity and wonder. The Little Island won the Caldecott Medal in 1947 for its marvelous illustrations by Leonard Weisgard.

Genre

The first part of The Little Island, with its beautiful accompanying illustrations, seems to be little more than a nature study of the natural life on an island in the ocean; but this part also establishes well the "character" of the little island as a patient, wise, understanding participant in the continuing adventure of the cyclical, changing patterns of nature. The descriptions in the first part of the story are excellent, a kind of child's version of the descriptions to be found in Thoreau's Walden. The picture of the island experiencing the changes brought by time and the seasons is couched in vivid and particularized language and in a fine, cadenced style.

Motif

The narrative pattern of the latter part of the story is somewhat suggestive of certain fairy tales in which a child leaves home to discover that ogres and monsters and wickedness inhabit the dark wood. In this story the kitten arrives on the island (with some "people" who never get into the story at all) and goes exploring, apparently alone like the island. In his isolation, he does not meet a monster; he magically becomes a talking cat and turns into a kind of gentle monster himself, badgering the island and the fish. This magical element of an island, a kitten, and a fish playing speaking roles intrudes only very little on the realism of the natural scene and probably does not bother children nearly so much as it does adults. Having satisfied himself that both he and the island are in a sense permanently part of a larger whole, the kitten becomes himself again and returns to the boat to sail away home.

Theme

The book is not broken-backed--that is, not really divided into a descriptive part and a narrative part. The first part of the story dramatizes the rhythm and unity of the cycle of nature; the second part suggests that islands and cats (and human beings) are, however separate they may appear to be, still part of that rhythm and unity. Both the island and the cat experience a surface aloneness; both are deeply involved in others beneath the surface. What the story says was said for more mature audiences by John Donne:

> No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were. Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind.

The story not only asserts, through what the island symbolizes and through what the kitten learns that it symbolizes, that "No man is an island"; it also suggests that the recognition of one's involvement in that which lies beyond oneself is partly, at least, a matter of faith. And this is the point of one of the finest sentences in the story: "The cat's eyes were shining with the secret of it."

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Before reading the story, the teacher should know it well so that she can read with proper intonation, showing proper excitement and enthusiasm as she reads. Notice the importance of the cadence of the story. The lines are short and the story moves quite rapidly until the cat accepts and ponders the message of the fish. Then he sits by, sort of musingly, thinking of the special secret he must accept in faith and believe. Here the prose moves more quietly.

II. The following discussion questions may be useful in linking story and pictures into an effective whole.

1. How does the author get us to see the island? Do we really know how the island looked? (Bring out the descriptions and the use of repetition in description.)
2. What time of year was it? When? How did the author get us to know it was a certain season besides just saying so?
3. How do you think the kitten felt when the island claimed to be part of all the land? How did you feel?
4. How do you think the kitten felt when the fish said to "believe on faith"?

5. What did the author compare to a "quiet secret"? What can you think of that might be like a "quiet secret"?
6. Did the story begin and end in the same season?

Composition Activities

I. Have the students write a "picture" in words of the season which they like best. Let them illustrate their prose pictures with drawings or paintings. Perhaps the class could make a mural showing and describing the four seasons by selecting from the pictures written and drawn.

II. Have the students write or tell a story of their own about an island or a trip to the island.

III. Have the children imagine how the story might have ended if the storm had come up before the kitten left the little island. Such variations that the children could deal with may produce some interesting stories.

Language Explorations

I. Diction

A. Reread descriptive phrases that are especially fine. (Some appear on nearly every page!) Ask the children if they can explain why they think these phrases are especially good. Ask them to try to make up similar phrases.

B. Discuss the storm at the end of the story. Notice especially fine phrases describing the storm. Ask the children to explain why these words are so effective. (onomatopoeia, alliteration)

the wind whistled
waves as big as glassy mountains
lightning and thunder
the howling, moaning, whistling wind

II. Nature of Language

Discuss the way animals communicate with each other. Note that animals do not speak as human beings do, but that they do communicate in some ways. Ask children to make a list of the ways in which they think that animals make signs to one another and for what purposes. Ask them to think of ways in which "animal talk" is different from "people talk." Give the boys and girls plenty of room for speculation at this level.

Extended Activities

Children might enjoy making dioramas of some of the scenes from the story. The dioramas could be suggested and created by committees of children. A shoe box serves very well as the base for a diorama.

POETRY:

Robert Louis Stevenson, "The Wind" Time for Poetry
(A curious child must accept on faith something that he cannot see--the lesson that the kitten learned when his "eyes were shining with the secret of it.")

Hilda Doolittle Aldington, "Storm" Time for Poetry
(The children might like to compare this word picture of a storm to that in The Little Island.)

"Spring is showery, flowery, bowery" Time for Poetry
(This little Mother Goose rhyme, brief as it is, contains some fine exercises in suggestive diction.)

David McCord, "Every Time I Climb a Tree" Golden Treasury of Poetry
(These experiences of a child learning about the world that surrounds him are quite similar to those the kitten experiences on the island.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Robert McCloskey, Time of Wonder (New York: The Viking Press, 1957).

John Langstaff, Over in the Meadow (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1957).

Robert McCloskey, Make Way for Ducklings (New York: The Viking Press, 1941).

Unit 8: Myth:

THE STORY OF THE FIRST WOODPECKER

THE STORY OF THE FIRST BUTTERFLIES

MYTH:
THE STORY OF THE FIRST WOODPECKER
THE STORY OF THE FIRST BUTTERFLIES

CORE TEXTS:

"The Story of the First Woodpecker"
"The Story of the First Butterflies"

(Note: Books containing these stories are very difficult to obtain; both stories, therefore, are reproduced here.)

THE STORY OF THE FIRST WOODPECKER

In the days of long ago the Great Spirit came down from the sky and talked with men. Once as he went up and down the earth, he came to the wigwam of a woman. He went into the wigwam and sat down by the fire, but he looked like an old man, and the woman did not know who he was.

"I have fasted for many days," said the Great Spirit to the woman. "Will you give me some food?" The woman made a very little cake and put it on the fire. "You can have this cake," she said, "if you will wait for it to bake." "I will wait," he said.

When the cake was baked, the woman stood and looked at it. She thought, "It is very large. I thought it was small. I will not give him so large a cake as that." So she put it away and made a small one. "If you will wait, I will give you this when it is baked," she said, and the Great Spirit said, "I will wait."

When that cake was baked, it was larger than the first one. "It is so large that I will keep it for a feast," she thought. So she said to her guest, "I will not give you this cake, but if you will wait, I will make you another one." "I will wait," said the Great Spirit again.

Then the woman made another cake. It was still smaller than the others had been at first, but when she went to the fire for it, she found it the largest of all. She did not know that the Great Spirit's magic had made each cake larger, and she thought, "This is a marvel, but I will not give away the largest cake of all." So she said to her guest, "I have no food for you. Go to the forest and look there for your food. You can find it in the bark of the trees, if you will."

The Great Spirit was angry when he heard the words of the woman. He rose up from where he sat and threw back his cloak. "A woman must be good and gentle," he said, "and you are cruel. You shall no longer be a woman and live in a wigwam. You shall go out into the forests and hunt for your food in the bark of trees."

The Great Spirit stamped his foot on the earth, and the woman grew smaller and smaller. Wings started from her body and feathers grew upon her. With a loud cry she rose from the earth and flew away to the forest.

And to this day all woodpeckers live in the forest and hunt for their food in the bark of trees.

--from Florence Holbrook, The Book of Nature Myths (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1930).

THE STORY OF THE FIRST BUTTERFLIES

The Great Spirit thought, "By and by I will make men, but first I will make a home for them. It shall be very bright and beautiful. There shall be mountains and prairies and forests, and about it all shall be the blue waters of the sea."

As the Great Spirit had thought, so he did. He gave the earth a soft cloak of green. He made the prairies beautiful with flowers. The forests were bright with birds of many colors and the sea was the home of wonderful sea-creatures. "My children will love the prairies, the forests, and the seas," he thought, "but the mountains look dark and cold. They are very dear to me, but how shall I make my children go to them and so learn to love them?"

Long the Great Spirit thought about the mountains. At last, he made many little shining stones. Some were red, some blue, some green, some yellow, and some were shining with all the lovely colors of the beautiful rainbow. "All my children will love what is beautiful," he thought, "and if I hide the bright stones in the seams of the rocks of the mountains, men will come to find them, and they will learn to love my mountains."

When the stones were made and the Great Spirit looked upon their beauty he said: "I will not hide you all away in the seams of the rocks. Some of you shall be out in the sunshine, so that the little children who cannot go to the mountains shall see your colors." Then the South Wind came by, and as he went, he sang softly of forests flecked with light and shadow, of birds and their nests in the leafy trees. He sang of the moon-light and the starlight. All the wonders of the night, all the beauty of the morning, were in his song.

"Dear South Wind," said the Great Spirit, "here are some beautiful things for you to bear away with you to your summer home. You will love them, and all the little children will love them." At these words of the Great Spirit, all the stones before him stirred with life and lifted themselves on many-colored wings. They fluttered away in the sunshine, and the South Wind sang to them as they went.

So it was that the first butterflies came from a beautiful thought of the Great Spirit, and in their wings were all the colors of the shining stones that he did not wish to hide away.

--from Florence Holbrook, The Book of Nature Myths (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1930).

ALTERNATE TEXT:

"Why Wild Roses Have Thorns"

--available in Frances Jenkins Olcott, The Red Indian Fairy Book (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917) and also in Edna Johnson, Carrie E. Scott, and Evelyn R. Sickels, Anthology of Children's Literature, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1948).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This unit introduces the child to the world of myth, a world which is most important to the understanding of native Western literature. The introduction to mythology is accomplished in this unit through the use of two myths from American Indian lore, a body of mythology particularly child-like in its explanations of nature and the relationships between men and the supernatural "beings" the Indians believed to exist in the universe.

The objectives of the unit are (1) to help children understand how myths have grown as people attempted to explain their environment; (2) to encourage children to notice the elements of the nature myth as exemplified by the two Indian stories; (3) to provide occasion for enjoying and appreciating the religious and imaginative side of the American Indian; (4) to extend the motif of plot rhythm introduced in other stories; and, (5) to encourage a different type of creative writing.

Myths are a part of a child's literary heritage and they are necessary to the understanding of many fine literary works which the children will study later. The teacher of this unit should be familiar with the series of elementary units on the myth (one unit in each of the first six grades); and she will find a trilogy of seventh grade units on mythology particularly useful. The series, called Religious Story (Part I: Classical Myth; Part II: Hebrew Literature; Part III: American Indian Myth), furnishes a good deal of the information the teacher of even very young children should have if she is to teach the myths with some fullness of understanding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

"It is the rare child who is not enchanted with the stories of mythology. The sky-dwellers of the Greeks and Romans not only left a mark on our language, but they continue to spellbind each succeeding generation of children. Bellerophon taming the winged horse, Icarus plummeting through the sky into the sea, Hermes stepping cloudward on his winged sandals--these somehow catch the imagination with their dramatic beauty....Our language and our thinking are full of words and ideas derived from these sources.... There is a dramatic quality about the myths which has so captured the imaginations of poets that all poetry, and English poetry in particular, is filled with classical allusions. Both sculpture and the graphic arts reflect this same preoccupation. To miss some degree of familiarity with Greek-Roman mythology is to grope more or less blindly through the arts, particularly literature."[1]

"Myth and epic are a part of that anonymous stream of folklore which includes the folk tales and the fables. All these helped to weld people together with a body of common beliefs, customs, morals, and finally a hero cult. They were indeed the 'cement of society,' holding it together with a moral code. . . . to know the beauty of Olympus or Valhalla and to encounter the gods at their best is to dream with them some of man's ancient dreams of how splendid life may be for those who dare greatly. And some of these old dreams have come true. Icarus today has mastered the air, and modern Phaetons drive their chariots coolly across the sky and do not perish. These are splendid dreams for children to share, couched in symbols whose meanings will grow with the children's maturity."[2]

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[1] From Children and Books by May Hill Arbuthnot. Copyright © 1957 by Scott, Foresman and Company.

[2] From Time for Fairy Tales by May Hill Arbuthnot. Copyright © 1961 by Scott, Foresman and Company.

Genre

The two quotations above well express some of the justifications for introducing even very young children to their heritage of ancient myth. It will be well to explain something of the general nature of these stories that have so captured the imagination of men even into the scientific age in which we live. Simply, myths are stories used by people of primitive cultures to explain their ideas about deities, the origin of the world they live in, and the workings of nature. The principal themes of myths are the creation of the earth, peoples, and creatures; the origin of seasons and constellations and other natural phenomena; and the origin of social or religious customs.

Almost all primitive cultures have myths, and many of them are amazingly similar although the cultures may be far apart in time and place. Indian, Norse, Japanese, and Greek myths are original with the culture, but the Roman myths were in a large part borrowed from the Greeks and superimposed on the Roman culture. In all these bodies of mythology, the myths are attempts to explain the environment of the people. It was only natural that the myth-makers used the things they could see--the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, the sea, plants, animals, etc.--to symbolize the forces they believed operated to make things happen to them. The people in primitive cultures generally accepted the literal truth of their mythology, frequently developing it into an organized body of religion.

Motif

Among the simplest kinds of myths are the "pourquoi" stories, the "why" stories, explaining how the world got as it is. There are a great many of these stories in the mythology of the American Indian; and, since they are the simplest kind of myths, two of these charming stories form the introduction in this unit to the world of mythology. These nature myths are especially good for giving children their first experience with mythology, because they deal with everyday things in the children's world. They give very simply the concept that a myth is man's attempt to explain things in the world about him.

The first of these two myths, "The Story of the First Woodpecker," contains a great many elements of the folk tale. The plot has the repetitive device so common in folk literature, even to the point of repeating the same structural element three times--the common number of times in a folk tale. The story too contains a lesson for the moral instruction of the listener, another device of the folk tale or fable. Just as in most folk tales, the cold rain falls upon the wicked. The old woman is punished severely for her cruelty. The magical elements too are characteristic of the folk tale--the magical appearance of the Great Spirit and the magical enlargement of the cakes. But the story fits well the common pattern of the "why" myth--it explains the origin of the bird which seeks its food beneath the bark of trees in the forest, and it treats man in relationship with a god.

"The Story of the First Butterflies" is another "pourquoi" myth, and it fits quite obviously into a large body of stories explaining the loving creation of man's world by a superior being. This story, in contrast to the first, has few of the folk elements of plot or narrative structure. It is full of the magnificence and loveliness of the beautiful things of this earth created by a careful and considerate father. The two stories together show both sides of the divine being as they are generally presented in mythology--the stern judge demanding that humans act in deference to his wishes, and the loving creator full of consideration and care for his children.

Style

The style of both of these stories is simple, concise, and clear. There is little complexity of language, just as there is little complexity of meaning (something that is not always true of myths). The second story is especially rich in colorful imagery that should move the children to some creative endeavors, either in writing or in making pictures.

One word of caution: In the elementary school, myths should not be taught formally with emphasis on the names of gods and goddesses and the realms of each. Rather, they should be presented for the story and its significance to the culture in which it originated. The primary reasons for teaching the myths should be the beauty, the imaginative quality, and the entertainment values of the myths themselves. Only indirectly are they preparations for what is to come later in the literary experience of the child.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. "The Story of the First Woodpecker"

   A. Before reading the story, the teacher might explain to the children that this story is going to be about birds, especially that it will be an Indian story about how the woodpecker was created. Explain to them that the Great Spirit is the Indian God.

B. Read the story slowly and deliberately, in keeping with the Indian's slow, thoughtful speech. Try to build up an atmosphere of suspense with the repetition in the story. The anger of the Great Spirit and the stamping of his foot can be very impressive.

C. Discussion

1. What kind of woman lived in the wigwam visited by the Great Spirit?
2. How do you know what kind of woman she was?
3. Why couldn't the woman make a small cake?
4. Why didn't she want to give the old man a large cake?
5. Why did the Great Spirit turn the woman into a woodpecker instead of into some other bird, like a robin?
6. Do you remember the story of the "Gingerbread Boy"? How is this story like that one?

II. "The Story of the First Butterflies"

A. Review with the children "The Story of the First Woodpecker." Tell them that they will hear another Indian story about the origin of butterflies. This story is different: it is not a story about the punishment of someone who is wicked, but a story of the beautiful world the Great Spirit created for his people.

B. Read the story slowly and carefully, with considerable respect for the beautiful descriptive passages.

C. Discussion

1. Discuss the beauty of mountains, prairies, forests, and blue waters that the children have seen.
2. Why did the Great Spirit want man's home to be beautiful?
3. Why was the Great Spirit going to hide the beautiful rocks in the mountains?
4. Why did he decide not to hide them all?
5. Why was South Wind chosen to carry the butterflies to the children?
6. Do you know any pretty rocks which are hidden? (gold, diamonds, etc.)
7. Why do you suppose they are hidden?

Composition Activities

I. Tell how you think the Indian woman looked before she was turned into a woodpecker.

II. Discuss the method used by the woodpecker to get food.

III. Try a class nature myth on this form:

Why the ____________________ is ____________________.

robin	red-breasted
rainbow	curved (or many-colored)
turtle	slow

Language Explorations

I. Vocabulary

A. "The Story of the First Woodpecker":

fasted
feasted (Discuss the opposite meanings)

cloak
marvel

"Marvel," for example, might be discussed as follows:

1. What is a "marvel"?
2. What does the word mean to you?
3. What are some "scientific marvels"?
   (rockets, satellites, television, automatic doors)
4. What are some "natural marvels"?
   (spider web, evaporation, growth from seeds, etc.)

B. "The Story of the First Butterflies"

seams (in rocks--compare with other meanings, and with "seems")
prairies
flecked

II. After the discussion of the beautiful mountains, prairies, forests, and waters (Literature Presentation II. C), put the following words on the chalk board and think of words to describe them:

mountains	prairies	forests	waters

Children might fill in such words as:

mountains	prairies	forests	waters
tall	grassy	dark	bright
snow-capped	wide	thick	blue

Develop these words into descriptive sentences:

We could see the dark green forests on the hillside.
I saw tall snow-capped mountains in Colorado.

The words and the sentences children think of may be surprising.

Extended Activities

I. If one of the children has a rock collection, he might show and identify some of the more common "pretty" ones--quartz, jasper, granite, agate, etc.

II. Make Butterflies: drawn, colored, cut out; "mobile" butterflies with clothespin bodies; etc.

POETRY:

Louis Untermeyer, "Questions at Night"
Golden Treasury of Poetry
(This poem may be suitable for classes that become particularly involved in discussions of the origins of natural objects--the genre of the "pourquoi" story exemplified in this unit. The poem might stimulate some oral or even written compositions.)

Walt Whitman, "Miracles" Golden Treasury of Poetry
(This poem would be suitable for rather advanced classes that show extensive interest in the vocabulary discussions listed above. The poem is a fine concrete expression of the reverent wonder that probably ultimately inspired mythic legends such as those represented in this unit. The vocabulary of the poem is not entirely beyond first grade children; and it is of considerable value to expose children to the rhythmical patterns of non-rhyming poetry at an early age.)

Christina Georgina Rossetti, "Precious Stones"
Golden Treasury of Poetry
(This poem would be of some interest to a class if one of the students had a rock collection or knew enough of precious stones to "explain" the poem to the other children.)

William Jay Smith, "Butterfly" Time for Poetry
(A brief description of butterflies that the children might like to compare to the description in the story.)

Lillian Schulz Vanada, "Fuzzy wuzzy, creepy crawly"
Time for Poetry
(Full of effective "action descriptive" words indicative of the metamorphosis of worm to butterfly.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

The teacher might find more simple nature myths to read when time permits in the core text and also in:

Anne Terry White, The Golden Treasury of Myths and Legends (New York: The Golden Press, 1959).

Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire's Book of Greek Myths (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962).
In this book the teacher will find a wealth of well-told "creation" myths, along with many beautifully lithographed illustrations.

Unit 9: Fable:

THE DOG AND THE SHADOW

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

FABLE:
THE DOG AND THE SHADOW
THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

CORE TEXTS:

"The Dog and the Shadow"
"The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse"
--from Joseph Jacobs (ed.), The Fables of Aesop (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950).

ALTERNATE TEXTS:

"The Jay and the Peacocks"
"The Fox and the Grapes"
--from Joseph Jacobs (ed.), The Fables of Aesop (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This unit introduces the child to the classical literary form of the fable, brief narratives (usually with talking beasts as characters) that are written to point up moral or ethical implications of human action. For centuries, in a great variety of cultures, fables have been used for the moral instruction of the young in the ethical precepts of a culture. But fables do not have to be treated with heavy-handed didacticism, and their wisdom and simplicity, frequently presented in an amusing manner, appeal to even the very young in much the same way that folk tales appeal to them. The fables in this unit are two of the more simply structured tales credited to Aesop, the legendary Greek fable teller.

This unit, as an introduction to the fable, seeks (1) to begin the process of learning about fables; (2) to establish the recognition that human actions are frequently presented in literature by analogous animal actions; (3) to give students an opportunity to begin to analyze stories on a simple level; (4) to help children to understand how a story may exemplify a concept, or "moral" lesson; (5) to display the simplest of fable patterns; and (6) to give the children practice in forming personifications like those in the fables.

This unit relates directly to the second and fourth grade units on Aesop's fables and to the third and fifth grade units on "literary" fables and fables from Oriental folk traditions. Insofar as fables usually treat of animals acting with human characteristics, the unit is related to other elementary units which present animal stories with other aims in view: the "animal story" units, particularly the pseudo-fables of

Kipling's *Just So Stories* in the first three grades; the first and second grade units on folk tales; the first grade unit on *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*; the Grade 6 unit, *The Hobbit*; the Grade 4 unit, *Charlotte's Web*; and the Grade 3 unit, *Winnie-the-Pooh*. As the study of a form which characteristically uses the oblique perspectives of satire, symbolism, and allegory, the study of the fable points to many other elementary units concerned with simple symbolism (for example, the fifth grade unit on *The Door in the Wall*) and with other levels of meaning. In addition to coordinating with a great number of other elementary units in the attempt to investigate rather informally the varieties of literary forms, expressions, and meanings, this unit on the fable helps to lay an important foundation for a number of more analytical secondary units: units which take up the satiric use of the fable (ninth and twelfth grade units on satire); units which take up more sophisticated Greek literature (seventh grade unit on the classical myth, ninth grade unit on the epic, and tenth grade unit on tragedy); and units which take up techniques for attacking secondary levels of meaning (the Grade 7 units, *The Making of Stories* and *The Meaning of Stories*).

Insofar as the unit studies stories which express Greek moral idealism, it relates to the entire curriculum's consideration of literature as a vehicle for expressing the corruptions of the nature of the good life and for expressing imaginatively the essential moral and ethical precepts and assumptions upon which our culture stands. To see how closely these simple fables correspond to the basic standards of moral behavior in Western civilization, compare the qualities affirmed in these fables with those qualities which go to form *The Noble Man in Western Culture*, in a central eighth grade unit. The culmination of the elementary units on the fable is the sixth grade unit on Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, a humorous, satiric, allegorical representation of talking beasts who represent the good and the bad in modern society.

One cautionary note: The abstractions that the characters of fables personify are pretty sophisticated for first graders. This unit does not suggest that one teach the moralistic value of the fable as such. The fable is rather taught to provide the children with the enjoyment of a good story and to enhance their literary background. Particularly for very young children, the experience with the fable should be a pleasant, enlightening experience. One would hope that through their own discussions they might see the meaning or the basis of the story apart from the teacher's stating "this is the moral of the story."

selves, not personified. Where the fable deals with the ethics of human behavior, the parable treats of spiritual behavior, with the relationship of God to man.

The fable is intended to be simple, and the moral is intended to be obvious--indeed, it is usually stated explicitly at the end of the fable. The personifications of the fable illustrate qualities, and the actions of the characters provide examples of wise or foolish behavior, in ways that are intended to be understandable and memorable to simple minds. The simplicity of the fable genre appeals to children perhaps because the children represent a stage similar to the stage of the primitive culture for which the fables served. Although not written especially for children, fables are more deserving of the term "children's literature" than any other form of writing in existence prior to the 18th century.

This is not to say that every piece of literature that we include under the genre "fable" should be utterly clear in all its ramifications to every first grade child. Fables are especially useful for satiric purposes, and the basic genre of fable has blossomed into extremely complex literary productions, to which these comments about the fable apply only insofar as those literary achievements are basically fables. Three notable cases in point within this curriculum are The Wind in the Willows, George Orwell's Animal Farm, and the fourth book of Swift's Gulliver's Travels, all extremely complex underneath their deceptive simplicity, behind their masquerade as fables. But even the apparently simple "folk fables" which we deal with in this and other elementary units are frequently veiled about with satire, symbolism, and allegory. The teacher should understand clearly that in this introduction we are speaking of the basic, general characteristics of most things called "fables."

Structure

The structure of all fables is extremely simple, but one might classify fables according to their plot patterns into two general groups. One group contains those fables with a single impersonal character involved in a single incident to express the moral lesson. The first of the fables in this unit fits this pattern: there is one character, the dog; he is involved in one incident, the attempt to snatch the bone from the "other" dog in the water; the dog's greed makes him "grasp at the shadow and lose the substance."

The other group of fables classed by plot pattern is the wise beast--foolish beast fable. In this plot pattern, the foolish beast acts or speaks as if he were acting or speaking wisely; the foolish beast appears momentarily to get the better of the wise beast; the foolish beast defeats himself in his pride and cupidity; and the wise beast gains the reward of virtue, or of wisdom. This group of fables can be centered around a single incident, like "The Fox and the Crow," "The Tree and the Reed," "The Fox and the Cat," and literally hundreds of others. But sometimes these wise beast--foolish beast fables contain two more or less parallel incidents, like "The Lion and the Mouse." In this fable, first the Mouse is caught and then the Lion is caught. The difference in the two situations illustrates the wisdom of the Mouse and the foolishness of the Lion in his pride. The second of the two fables in this unit, "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," is a variation of this type. The dichotomy between the wise beast and the foolish beast is not carefully drawn. There is a suggestion that the country mouse is wiser in the end than the town mouse, but such is not necessarily the case since one could say that one moral of the story could be "A man is at home in his own country." In that case, the country mouse has been foolish to desire the fine rich living of his town cousin, but he later becomes wise through his experience. Here, as in "The Lion and the Mouse," the plot has two parallel incidents: first the town mouse visits the country mouse, then the country mouse returns the visit.

Theme

Usually there is one theme and one only in a fable. It is dramatized in the story and it is explicitly stated at the end of the story. Frequently the genre is developed into a more meaningful tale with a complex thematic structure, but then we should probably say that the fable is used as a device in the story. Because of the nature of the fable, however, especially in its adaptability to satiric purposes, the mature reader may find more "meaning" than the simple moral expresses. There is some suggestion, for example, of a satiric comparison between city and country life in the fable "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse." In any case, the main point of the fable remains the simple moral; it is not necessary or even desirable to pursue the "meaning" further, especially in a presentation to young children.

Character

The characters of simple fables are flat--they have no family, no pasts, no inner selves. They are generally completely impersonal, as "cold" as the abstractions they represent. True, the children may at times be sympathetic with one of the characters; but if they are it is probably because of the nature of the animal and the situation rather than because of the characteristics of the animal expressed in the story. For instance, in many of these fables they may feel a certain sympathy for a character just because he is a weak, "gentle" animal in danger from a bigger, more ferocious animal. The children are likely to "like" a mouse when he meets with a lion, or a lamb when he meets with a wolf, etc. This is especially true when the animal they have a natural kinship with is the "wise beast" in the story. A fable is intended to work that way, to make the listener "like" the wise or the virtuous character, not because he is a certain character but because he is wise or virtuous. For instance, most children would probably like "bunnies" better than "turtles" if they were asked to make a preference, but they invariably prefer the tortoise in "The Hare and the Tortoise" because of the wise beast--foolish beast motif.

Style

Since the characters in fables are symbols and there is little interest in the characters themselves, there are no descriptions of them. We meet a "mouse" or a "lion" or a "fox"; we rarely meet a "small, timid mouse scurrying busily about his day's work," or a "kingly, ferocious lion roaring wildly as he patrols his jungle realm," or even the conventional "sly old fox." Just as the characters are not dressed out in elaborate descriptions, neither is the simple narrative language of the fable. The style is straight, simple, sparse. Figures of speech or sensory images rarely rear their beautiful heads in fables. A fable is a kind of literary sugar-coated moral pill--and the sugar-coating is exceedingly thin.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Fables lend themselves very well to the storytelling technique of oral presentation. If the teacher tells the story rather than reads it, however, she should be very familiar with the fable so as not to lose its flavor or change its pattern.

II. If the teacher tells the story, she could easily use flannelboard characters to illustrate the telling.

III. During the discussion of the fables following the reading, the teacher of first grade children should not insist on the application of a moral. The children should be allowed a good deal of freedom in thinking about and discussing these questions and bringing in new ideas. If they begin to see the moral implications of the fable, encourage them to develop their ideas, but remember the purpose of presenting fables at this level is not to serve the purposes of didacticism.

Composition Activities

I. The children might like to try their hand at a fable, although the construction of one is fairly difficult since it must start from an abstract philosophical idea. The children probably could handle stories about animals with particular characteristics (greed, pride, etc.) to whom something happened, although they may not turn out to be stories with "morals."

II. If this unit is introduced before the children are able to write on their own, the teacher can write the stories on pieces of oaktag and leave out the nouns. The students may then substitute pictures in place of the nouns, thus creating picture-word stories the children can learn to read for themselves. If the children are able to write sentences, they may enjoy making a part of the stories in picture form and then writing captions.

III. If there are some children who can create a story, they may wish to choose which mouse they would like to be and write why they chose that particular one. The children may also tell their stories aloud to a teacher taking dictation or recording them on a tape recorder.

Language Explorations

I. Morphology

Show children how they can add endings to some words (nouns) to make them plural.

dog	dogs
cat	cats
place	places
shadow	shadows

(The children will probably happen upon other methods, for example, wolf, wolves, and even upon infixes, for example, mouse, mice; but the teacher should attempt to guide the exercise toward the development of one method of making plurals--the -s inflection.)

II. Phonology

Attempt to provide rhymes for key words:

mouse	mice	cat	dog	town
house	nice	rat	frog	clown
	rice	hat	hog	brown
		mat	fog	down
		bat	log	
		fat		

III. Have the students attempt to develop sentences using many words beginning with the same sound.

The cute country cat caught his cap.
The dirty dog digs down in the den.

IV. Since descriptive phrases are lacking in the fable, the children may wish to make their own (oral or written) and then illustrate them. The game of closing their eyes and seeing the picture in their minds may be useful here.

dog	a big brown fluffy dog
plank	a long brown splintery plank
brook	a rippling silvery brook
meat	- - - -

Extended Activities

I. "The Dog and the Shadow" lends itself easily to dramatization. One child crossing the plank (a row of chairs) could look into the brook (a mirror), drop the meat (construction paper), and realize in disgust what he had done. The narrative dramatized may be an original one parallel to this. It might use a cat and a fish, a frog and a fly, or a sea gull and a fish rather than a dog and some meat.

II. The children might like to learn the musical version of "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse" (entitled "The City Mouse and the Country Mouse") found in Silver Burdett, *New Music Horizons*, Grade 1, page 81.

POETRY:

Nancy Byrd Turner, "The Buccaneer" - *Time for Poetry*
(A good poem for the children to use in considering the "character" of the dog in the fable. From little more information--the description of a single incident--the audience gains quite a different notion of the dog.)

Rose Fyleman, "Mice";
Lucy Sprague Mitchell, "The House of the Mouse";
Christina Georgina Rossetti, "The city mouse lives in a house" *Time for Poetry*
(A series of poems that will add some "character" to the sketchy outlines of the mice in the fable.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Cicely Englefield, "George and Angela," Told Under the Magic Umbrella (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1945).

"The Story of a Little Gray Mouse," Read Me More Stories (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1951).

Miriam Schlein, City Boy, Country Boy (Chicago: Childrens Press, 1955).

Unit 10: Other Lands and People:

A PAIR OF RED CLOGS

OTHER LANDS AND PEOPLE:
A PAIR OF RED CLOGS

CORE TEXT:

Masako Matsuno, A Pair of Red Clogs, ill. by Kazue Mizumura (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1960).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

Particularly suitable as introductions for children to other cultures are books about the peoples of the Far East. There is something about the daintiness of Japanese art, for instance, that suggests a delicacy and a sensitivity in the Japanese people which appeal especially to children. In the elementary curriculum A Pair of Red Clogs and Crow Boy (the latter for Grade 2) introduce the children to the charm of the East. A Pair of Red Clogs, the core text for this unit, is a delightful story about problems common to all children, problems which they find important as well. The story begins with the excitement of a new pair of shoes (clogs, in this case), a kind of excitement that all the children know and can feel. The climax of the plot revolves around a moral decision, the kind of simple moral choice once again that all children can understand.

The objectives of this unit are (1) to introduce to the children a charming story of children of another land; (2) to illustrate the fact that children of all cultures have similar problems and experiences; and (3) to exhibit a story with some significant meaning in a form simple enough to be understood by any child.

This unit sets the temper for the whole series of units about children of other lands and cultures. It stresses the similarities among children over the world rather than their differences (many recent books oriented to a "social studies" approach have tended to do the latter); however, similarities are not stressed to the point of ignoring the individual qualities of any particular culture.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

Both the author of A Pair of Red Clogs, Masako Matsuno, and the illustrator, Kazue Mizumura, are natives of Japan. They both came to the United States to study. After Miss Matsuno received her Master's degree she returned to Tokyo to live, but Kazue Mizumura married and remained in New York City after her college training. A

Pair of Red Clogs is Miss Matsuno's first book for children.

Structure

The basic plot pattern of A Pair of Red Clogs is similar to that of many of the other stories in the first grade program, in that Mako gets in some difficulty away from the protection of her home. But the "monster" that Mako encounters during her adventure is a monster that her conscience discovers in her own heart after she has set out deliberately to deceive her mother. And she realizes the existence of the monster only as she returns to her home. The "monster," of course, was her own behavior: playing the weather-telling game with her new red clogs so that they were cracked and then compounding the crime by attempting to ruin the clogs deliberately so that her mother would have to buy some new ones. The most monstrous part of her behavior, however, was the sense of guilt that began to weigh upon her as she realized that she was "a liar"; and the burden of that guilt became heavier and heavier as she began to think that she was going to get away with it. Mako became more and more unhappy as she became more and more aware that her mother was not going to punish her--but she wasn't going to buy her any new clogs, either!

("The water was cold, and I was cold, too.")

It is very difficult for a child to bear unpunished sin--the burden of guilt without the opportunity of atonement becomes very heavy. The salvation of Mako, and of the story for very young children, is curiously enough in the punishment that she does suffer: after she had cleaned the clogs and dried them, she noticed that the color of the thongs had run.

Theme

In spite of the rather ominous moralizing that the previous paragraphs suggest, A Pair of Red Clogs contains a view of behavior completely in sympathy with a child's world. The significant meaning in the story for the children comes about because of the skillful use of the "frame" of the story. The story is a reminiscence by a "grandmother" when she happens upon a little old pair of red clogs. The function that this frame serves is to give the story a sense of history--a sense that is rare in books for young children. It is clear that the grandmother recognizes at the end of the story that her granddaughter, and her granddaughter's granddaughter, etc., will act like little girls--they will play the weather-telling game with their new clogs, letting them fall on the stone road. What may not be so obvious is the complete understanding and wisdom that motivate the mother in the story. Mako thinks that she is fooling her mother, and much of her unhappiness comes from that delusion, while in reality, her mother knows all along exactly what has occurred and what is occurring. How? Why, she behaved like a little girl when she was a little girl--she too played the weather-telling game, letting her new clogs fall upon the stone road. It is only near the end, after she has shown a singular disinterest in the whole matter, that Mother (who has not been told the truth) gently cautions Mako about the very things she has done!

Style

One of the most charming features of the story is the simplicity of the language. There is little description, but there is just enough of the right kind of detail in the book. Consequently, the language is remarkably provocative, along with the excellent illustrations, of very vivid images. The vividness of the language gives the story a tone of precision, so that it achieves a peculiar degree of authenticity. Although the story was written in English, one gets the feeling (especially from the sound of the clogs, as the author intended) that the rhythms of the language are especially Japanese.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Most of the children will probably have heard of Japan, but they may have little notion of where it is. If any of the children exhibit any sense of geography, they might be interested in finding Japan on a globe (preferable to a flat map). The children should be asked in advance to try to remember things in the story that they think could happen to them, even though they do not live in Japan.

II. Read the story aloud to the children. Since the illustrations are so important to the story, the children should be seated so that they can all see the pictures as the story is presented.

It might help the children to understand and to grasp the idea of the several generations appearing in the story if the teacher could place three chairs (preferably in graduated sizes!) at the place from which she will read the story. The smallest chair would be for Mako as a child, the next for Mako's mother, and the last for Mako as a grandmother. The relationship between the "two Mako's," and that between the young Mako and her mother, might become more clear to the children if they can associate the people with their chairs. Spending a few minutes in establishing these relationships with the children may make the whole story more enjoyable.

III. Many discussion questions, such as those that follow, may suggest themselves from the reading.

1. At the beginning of the story the grandmother told about finding the old cracked clogs in the storeroom. Whose clogs were they? When had the grandmother worn them?
2. What was the grandmother looking for in the storeroom? Why did she need a box?
3. How were the old clogs and the new clogs alike? How were they different?
4. How old was the grandmother when the old clogs were new? (As old as her granddaughter is now.) Look at the pictures to see if you think the little girl is about the same age you are. (Be sure the children understand that the little girl has now grown up and is a grandmother.)
5. Where did the grandmother live when she was a little girl? Where did she and her mother go to buy the new clogs? What were some of the colors she had to choose from? What color would you have chosen?
6. How do you think Mako felt as she carried her new clogs down the street? What things did she see in the shops? How did these things look to her? When you are very happy, does everything look especially bright and pretty to you, too?
7. When Mako walked what did her new clogs "say"? What song did they "sing" when she ran? What did her friends and other people say about her new clogs?
8. How was the weather-telling game played? Why did the clogs stop talking and singing? What kind of a sound did they make now that there was a crack in them? How do you think Mako felt then?
9. Why did Mako think that Mother would not buy another pair of clogs right away?
10. What was Mako's "bright idea"? After she got the clogs muddy, what made her suddenly decide that perhaps her plan was not such a good one, after all?
11. How did Mako feel when she realized that her mother was not going to punish her? Why was she still miserable?
12. Why do you think Mako kept the clogs for so many years instead of throwing them away?
13. Do you think Mako's mother knew all along what had happened? Do you think Mako's mother remembered how she, too, as a child, had played the weather-telling game?

Composition Activities

I. As an oral language activity the following questions might be used to encourage children to relate some of their own experiences:

1. Have you ever wished for new shoes when you knew you couldn't have them just yet?
2. When you go to buy new shoes, do you find it hard to choose which ones you like best?
3. What do people mean when they talk about a "guilty conscience"? How is this different from having other people know you are guilty?
4. What is a storeroom? Do you have one in your house? If not, where do you keep things you don't use often? Why do people like to keep souvenirs, pictures, and scrapbooks? What kinds of things do you hate to throw away? (This discussion could strengthen the children's concepts of past, present, future--concepts which have been presented so skillfully in this story.)

II. The children, either individually or as a group, could make up a story about what happens to the new red clogs that Mako is sending to her granddaughter. What experiences will the granddaughter have with her new clogs? What kind of a song will these clogs "sing"?

Language Explorations

I. Diction

A. The weather game could be used as an introduction to several language activities centered around weather forecasting.
Ask the children--

Could the Japanese children really tell about the weather by playing the weather-telling game? Do you know of any other "pretend" ways of telling about the weather? (They may have heard their fathers say, "Now that I've just washed the car, it's sure to rain," or something similar.)

How many different ways can we really learn about the weather?

1. We can look outside. What can we learn just by looking?
2. We can go outside. What things can we learn by going outside?
3. Other responses to be elicited might include radio, TV, newspapers and weather station.

B. What are some of the words we use when we talk about the sounds of weather? (howl of wind, patter of rain, crash of thunder, etc.)

C. To aid the weather forecasters a list of descriptive words about weather could be placed on a chart: snowy, rainy, sunny, cloudy, windy, foggy, hot, cold, etc.

II. Vocabulary

A. What does "Ashita tenkini nare" mean? (The teacher should seize upon this as an opportunity to create an awareness that our language is not the only language.)

B. Ask the children what the word *pair* means. Ask them to think of other words that have a similar meaning--of "two-ness." Write the words that they discover on the board.

two couple twins twice mates

C. Why do you think the fire was called a *bath-fire*? What is a *postbox*? What do we call a place to mail letters? (Write *mailbox* and *post office* on the board. Ask the children which parts of the words are used in the word *postbox*.)

D. The teacher might say each of the following words, then ask a child to demonstrate the meaning of the word:

tiptoeing skipping shuffling hopping
walking running dragging jumping

E. How many kinds of shoes can you think of?

clogs boots slippers
thongs sandals

III. Phonology

A. When the children go out for recess, ask them to listen to the sound their shoes make--in the hall, on the sidewalk, on the ground. Ask them to keep the sounds in their minds. After recess, let the children relate these sounds to their classmates.

B. How would the "song" made by cowboy boots be different from the "song" made by bedroom slippers?

C. Why is the weather man a community helper?

The children could take turns being a weather forecaster. Their presentations could be taped and played back giving each child the experience of hearing his own voice. A chart of standards for newscasting could be compiled. For example:

Speak clearly.
Speak in a pleasant voice.
Use careful pronunciation.

This would be a good opportunity to help the children build an awareness of a few of the common errors they make--jist for just, fer for for, becuz for because, etc.

D. The following underlined words could be written on the board to focus attention on the fact that some of our words sound alike even though they have different spellings and different meanings.

I would like to have some new shoes.
Mako's clogs were made of wood.

Day by day, the clogs got dirtier.
Mother would not buy another pair so soon.

The black color of the thongs had come out and dyed the red part.
The plant in our room has died.

The flower had dew on its petals.
My mother used flour in making the cake.
Do you like to help your mother cook?

IV. Ask the children how Mako cleaned her clogs. Place the words first, then, next, last on the board. Point out how these words help us tell things in a certain order. Encourage the children to use these words as they explain how Mako cleaned her clogs.

Extended Activities

I. This story is an excellent one for dramatization. The children will find it challenging to try to portray the two opposite feelings--of being extremely happy, then extremely sad--equally well. A pair of thongs and an obi or two made from crepe paper would help to set the stage.

II. Each child could be given two sheets of paper on which he could draw a pair of shoes he would like to have. After drawing his "favorite" kind of shoes, he could cut them out and place them in the "shoe store." Each child could place a price-tag on his shoes. (The teacher might like to introduce the word yen [and its equivalent in our currency] at this point and let the children price their shoes in yen instead of dollars and cents.) This activity could be extended to include the customary "store" situations of buying, selling, arranging, etc.

III. The picture of Mako's family around the table could lead to an interesting discussion of Japanese culture--clothing, low table, cushions, rice, fish, chopsticks, etc.

POETRY:

Tom Robinson, "Shoes" Time for Poetry
(Every child loves to try on fathers's shoes, mother's shoes and perhaps even baby brother's shoes.)

Clara Doty Bates, "Who Likes the Rain?" Time for Poetry
(The little duck likes the rain because he's wearing, not red clogs, but little red rubbers.)

Rhoda W. Bacmeister, "Galoshes" Time for Poetry
(Like Mako's red clogs, Susie's galoshes make a special song: splishes and splashes and slooshes and sloshes.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Elsa Beskow, Pelle's New Suit (New York: Harper & Row, 1929).
Pelle's old suit got shorter and shorter. He managed to get a new one, although he obtained it in an unusual way.

Unit 11: Biography:

THEY WERE STRONG AND GOOD

BIOGRAPHY:
THEY WERE STRONG AND GOOD

CORE TEXTS:

Robert Lawson, They Were Strong and Good (New York: The Viking Press, 1940).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

The selection for this unit, Robert Lawson's They Were Strong and Good, constitutes an ideal introduction to the literary biography for very young children. It deals with historical, or at least semi-historical, figures in terms that the first grader can easily understand, the terms of the family. As such, Lawson's book is not really a "biography" in the strict sense of the term, since it is not "the story of a person's life." The story does have many of the essential features of a good biography, however, so that it is suitable for its purpose as an introduction to the form. The objectives of the unit are (1) to introduce to the children a story of good quality that will help them to prepare for the reading of historical and biographical literature; (2) to interest the children in a story of people who lived before the present time; (3) to exhibit the human qualities that are necessary for families and nations to become great; and (4) to develop in the children a sense of historical time in regard to their own families.

This unit may be regarded as preparation for the other units in the curriculum on biography, and as building directly toward the units on historical fiction. Some interesting comparisons can be made between the units on biography and historical fiction and those dealing with legendary and "tall tale" figures. The stories of Febold Feboldson and Pecos Bill (fourth and fifth grade "folk tale" units), and the legends of Robin Hood (fifth grade "adventure" unit) and King Arthur (sixth grade "historical fiction" unit) probably had their origins in some real historical figures in the distant past, but these stories can certainly not be called biographies. Since most of the biographical units contain themes of what qualities a man must have to become great, these units on biography relate closely to the Grade 8 unit, The Noble Man in Western Culture and to the Grade 10 unit, The Leader and the Group.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

An interesting note on Robert Lawson (1892-1957), author and illustrator, appears in the back of the core text, on the jacket.

Mr. Lawson's remarks perhaps give the reader an idea of why his works are so successful. They Were Strong and Good won the Caldecott Medal for 1941, as the "most distinguished picture book for children" of that year.

Genre

Biography is perhaps the most accessible form of non-fiction that elementary school children encounter, and it is becoming increasingly popular among writers and readers of books for children. The identification of the genre of biography is quite simple--a biography is the story of a person's life. But there is a good deal to be said about the characteristics of biography in comparison with other forms of writing and about the characteristics that go to form a good biography as distinct from an inferior one. They Were Strong and Good does not exactly fit the simple definition of the genre we have given since it is not the complete story of one person's life, but in that it presents a factual history of a number of members of the same family it fits the genre closely enough for our purposes.

A respectable biography will be accurate and authentic in its details as well as in its general pattern. Scholarly biographies are carefully documented, but biographies for children usually are not. They often leave out a good deal of the detail that a complete biography would include, but they really have no need to be inaccurate or misleading in what they do present. The study of biography gives students an opportunity to observe the compilation and arrangement of particular details to create a coherent hypothesis. For older children particularly, the study of biography may teach the student something of the responsibility a writer assumes for accuracy and reliability. First grade children cannot absorb much of the theory of logical processes, but they can observe in this story whether they think the author is justified in making the generalizations that he makes about his ancestors--"They worked very hard and were strong and good."

Character

Since a biography seeks to tell the life story of an individual in most instances, the element of character is perhaps the most important single element in a biography. A biographer should present his main character as completely and as honestly as he can, revealing his faults and his weaknesses as well as his virtues and his strengths. Biographies are progressively growing away from the concept of idol-worshiping tales with didactic motives, so that recent biographies are more likely to present characters that are truly alive, with all the qualities of humanity. The overwhelming concern of the author should always be to present his subject as accurately and as near to what he really was as possible.

It is just one more tribute to the greatness of the author and his subject to recognize that in spite of its uninhibited moral purpose Boswell's *Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson* remains the greatest biography ever written. One of Boswell's purposes was the moral improvement of the reader, but he conceived of the biography as a history that should reveal *every* side of its subject completely and accurately so as to exhibit what a man ought and ought not do with his life.

One does not find this revelation of the "inner man" the primary concern in biographies written for children. Children judge a man not so much by what he *is* as by what he *does*. They do not judge him by his motives, his psychological actions and reactions, not even by his private virtues and vices; they judge a man by his actions, and only by the virtues and vices that he exhibits in his actions. Consequently, biographies for children concentrate on revealing a man's qualities by the things that he does and by the things that he says. The author usually selects those items which reveal outstanding characteristics (if he is a responsible author, he performs his task of selection scrupulously). As a result, the characters in juvenile biographies are considerably flattened out as compared with the complexity found in scholarly biographies. One can easily observe the result of this method in *They Were Strong and Good*. Lawson tells the reader what his ancestors *did*; he rarely tells whether they were brave or kind or cowardly or benevolent, etc., only that they "worked hard and were strong and good." The children can judge very well for themselves by the actions of the characters whether they really were brave, kind, etc.

Structure

One cannot distinguish definite structural motifs or patterns in the body of literature identified as "biography" since the story of a man's life is pretty much determined by the life of the man. Consequently, nearly all biographies are told in a straight chronological narrative pattern. A true artist of the biography must achieve his dramatic and thematic effects more through the process of selection than through the process of arrangement. *They Were Strong and Good*, primarily because it is not the continuous narrative of a single life, does have a patterned structure of parallel incidents that is particularly appealing to children--this is one reason it is so suitable as an introduction to very young children. But even within his relative freedom, Lawson could not rearrange his material *any* way that he wanted to achieve a particular effect. He could not, for instance, present his father before his maternal grandfather even if he desired, because he was limited by the restrictions of chronology. This concern with the sense of time in biography is unusual in children's literature, which usually is little concerned with time. Most of the stories the first grade child knows and has heard operate in a context within which time is frozen--things just happen "once upon a time" in an unchanging environment.

Style

In order to achieve a dramatic effect, most authors of biographies for children will introduce dialogue. The dialogue is for the most part invented by the author; he cannot know what actual words his hero used on any particular occasion except in very rare instances where the speech was recorded in sone way. This problem leads one to make a distinction between "fictionalized biography" and "biographical fiction." When an author invents dialogue or puts thoughts into the heads of his characters in order to make the story "live," he may or may not have some actual documentary evidence to form the basis of what he invents. If the facts of a biography can be largely documented and only a few liberties have been taken with such matters as specific dialogue, the story is "fictionalized biography." If the facts of the historical character can only be documented in general and the story itself is largely the creation of the author centered around those general facts, the story is "biographical fiction." Although They Were Strong and Good contains no dialogue, one can easily see that it belongs in the "fictionalized biography" class, much the preferable of the two. The essential drama of biography lies in the life of the hero; and when the author uses scholarly research as the basis for his conscientious retelling in a dramatic style, he can create a story that contributes measurably to children's literature.

Theme

A skillful biographer will not present a story simply as a chronological list of details; he will usually discover that a theme emerges from the details that make up the life of a man and use that theme as a unifying element in his book. Robert Lawson uses his theme repetitively to unify the episodes of the story treated in this unit, the theme that he states explicitly in his "Foreword":

> ... this is not alone the story of my parents and grandparents, it is the story of the parents and grandparents of most of us who call ourselves Americans.
>
> None of them were great or famous, but they were strong and good. They worked hard and had many children. They all helped to make the United States the great nation that it now is.
>
> Let us be proud of them and guard well the heritage they have left us.

This is not just empty flag waving. One of the greatest values of teaching biography is the sense of the rich heritage that biographers preserve by presenting the stories of real people and revealing the qualities they had and used to create or to protect our culture.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. By way of introducing the story, ask the children if they know anything about their grandparents when they were children. What do they know about their fathers and mothers when they were children? Perhaps they can find out something about these stories. Show the children the cover of the book and explain that the picture is of a family album. Ask them if their families have family albums or if their grandparents have family albums.

II. As you read the story slowly, show the illustrations that Lawson has provided. Robert Lawson is probably better known as an illustrator of children's books than he is as an author. The pictures are a very important part of this book.

III. Ask the children if they heard any words they did not know the meaning of. (They may mention brig, heritage, wharves, lumberjacks, convent, grant, pacing horse, deserters, guidon.) Do not dwell too long on such words at this grade level, but help the children understand the words well enough to understand the story.

IV. Discussion

A. If the teacher can arrange to read the story twice, it might be well to postpone the discussion until after the second reading.

B. Suggested questions for visiting together about the story.

1. What did "My Mother's Father" do? Does this tell you anything about the kind of person he was? Remember the captain from Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain.
2. How can you tell that Paterson, New Jersey (the home of "My Mother's Mother") is different now from what it used to be? How is it different? Would you rather live in Paterson now or when "My Mother's Mother" was little? Why?
3. How did "My Mother's Mother" meet "My Mother's Father"? Why didn't she like sailing on the sea?
4. Why didn't "My Mother" like the Indians? Were they wild

and mean?

5. What did "My Mother" do at the convent? Why didn't the bees sting her when she took their honey?
6. Do you think you would like "My Father's Father"? Do you know anybody who always wants to fight something?
7. What did "My Father" do with the horse Emma G. during the war? Would it have taken courage to do what he did?
8. Why was "My Father" proud to hold up the flag for the cannon to line up on? Do you think you could sit very still and hold up the flag when someone was shooting at you?
9. What did "My Father" find when he went home after the war?
10. Do you think the author was right when he said that his parents and grandparents "worked hard and were strong and good"?

Composition Activities

The students could make booklets about "You" or "Me," with one picture and a sentence or two per page. Possible topics include:

Father
Mother
Baby Laughs (or cries, or eats)
Baby Walks
Baby's Toys
Birthdays
School

Language Explorations

I. Phonology

Read a page of the story asking the children to listen for certain sounds:

Ask one group to listen for words beginning with "m."
Ask another group to listen for words beginning with "gr."

After you have read the page have the children tell you the words they heard and list them on the board under the appropriate heading.

II. Morphology

A. Have the children listen for words ending in "s" as you read a page. (The page opposite the picture of Father riding

Emma G. away from the Yankees is a good one.) Put the words the children recall on the board. Then ask the children to decide (1) which "s" words meant "more than one"; (2) which "s" words were "possessives"; and (3) which "s" words had the "s" as part of the regular singular word.

B. Give the children a number of opportunities to use "strong," "stronger," and "strongest." Discuss the ways of performing similar operations with other words: "nice," "fast," etc. During the discussion, the children will undoubtedly bring up the other word in comparing this word: "good," "better," "best."

III. Vocabulary

A. Discuss compound words with the children. This story has a good many of them: grandmother, grandfather, lumberjacks, something, storekeeper, sometimes, etc.

B. Ask children to illustrate the physical aspects of the meaning of the word "strong." Have them discuss other ways of showing strength. They might discover the different kinds of strength shown by Tim in Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain or by George Washington in the other first grade biography unit if the children have read these books. Classroom situations may have arisen to illustrate various kinds of strength.

Extended Activities

I. Songs the children might enjoy are "Home" and "Mother's Day," from Richard Berg, et al. (ed.), Music for Young Americans (New York: American Book Company, 1959).

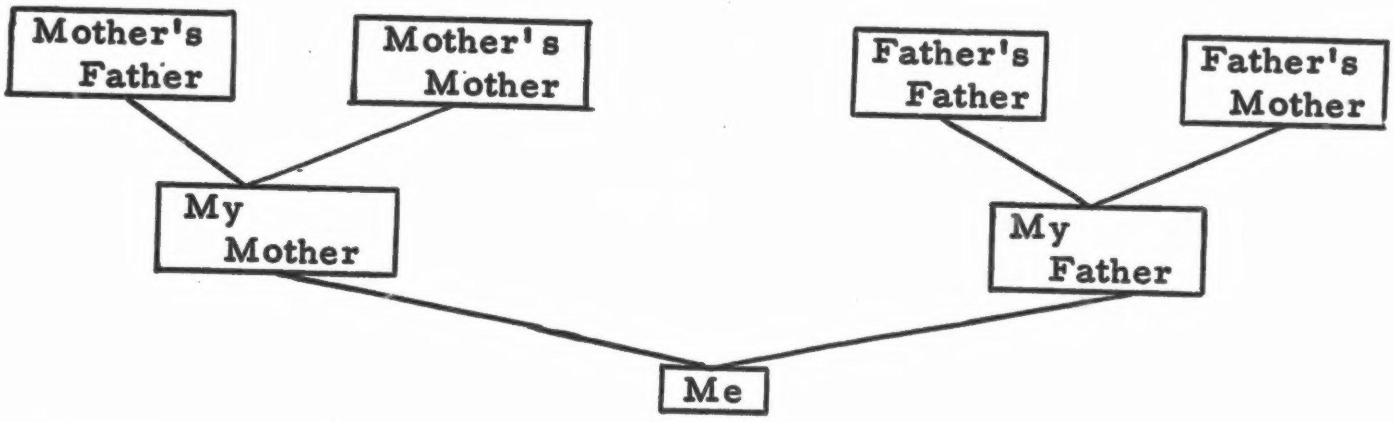
II. The children may be interested in the contemporary biography of Robert Lawson, the author of the core book. The teacher could report to them from such a source as the World Book Encyclopedia, which contains an entry for Robert Lawson.

III. Children might enjoy acting out parts of the story, especially if they could dress up in "old time" clothes or even in newspapers for "let's pretend" old fashioned clothes.

IV. The Family at Home, a filmstrip, is available from the Jam Handy Organization, 2821 East Grand Blvd., Detroit 11, Michigan.

V. The children might enjoy making a family tree for the bulletin board, using either pictures they draw themselves or pictures they cut from magazines:

MY FAMILY


Mother's Father
Mother's Mother
Father's Father
Father's Mother
My Mother
My Father
Me

POETRY:

Walt Whitman, "I Hear America Singing" *Golden Treasury of Poetry*

(Walt Whitman sings of the singing coming from the robust, joyous, hard-working American individual. Most first graders will be familiar with the occupations represented in the poem, and the strength exuded by the rhythms of the poem should certainly lead a child to think--"and they were strong and good.")

Dorothy Baruch, "Automobile Mechanics" *Time for Poetry*

(A boy and his father combine companionship and work in the kind of relationship that makes family ties "strong and good" in a modern society.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Miriam Young, *Georgie Finds a Grandpa* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., A Little Golden Book, 1954).

Unit 12: Biography:

GEORGE WASHINGTON

BIOGRAPHY:
GEORGE WASHINGTON

CORE TEXT:

Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire, George Washington (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1936).

ALTERNATE TEXT:

Ingri and Edgar Parin D' Aulaire, Abraham Lincoln (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1939).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

This children's biography of George Washington is the first "true" biography presented in the elementary school program. It is recommended that the unit on Robert Lawson's They Were Strong and Good precede this one since Lawson's book is a simple introduction to the basic principles of biographical writing. (The teacher may encounter some scheduling problems here since she will naturally wish to teach this unit just prior to February 22 and since she will want the other unit to precede this one. Furthermore, it is perhaps not advisable to teach two biography units in a row.) George Washington is a "true" biography in a sense that They Were Strong and Good is not: it is the story of one man's life. This excellent book by the D'Aulaires escapes for the most part the moralizing, idol-worshiping tone so prominent in stories about George Washington, and presents a reasonably accurate story of what George Washington did to make him a great man.

The objectives of the unit are (1) to present to the children an accurate, interesting story about the life of the most famous man of American history, George Washington; (2) to exhibit the characteristics of a man who, because of his special qualities, played a significant role as a leader in shaping the American heritage; and (3) to strengthen the children's notions of biography as a type of good literature.

This unit is related to the other units in the curriculum on biography and its particular subject matter to historical fiction units that display the American past, especially those expressing the "frontier spirit" of the builders of America. In addition to the elementary units on historical fiction, the teacher may find helpful the Grade 7 unit, Stories of the American West and the Grade 8 unit, The Historical Novel. Since this biography especially concerns the theme of what makes a man a great leader, the teacher of this unit should be familiar with the Grade 8 unit, The Noble Man in Western Culture and the Grade 10 unit, The Leader and the Group. The teacher will also find a great fund of information in the Grade 11 Themes in American Civilization, Part I: Individualism and Nature.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER:

Author

The D'Aulaires are among the most outstanding authors of authentic biographies for children. They present facts simply and directly, providing their characters with vitality through the skillful use of language and rich detail in colorful illustrations. Their books allow children to make their own judgments of heroes on the basis of what the heroes have done rather than on the basis of what someone has said about them. Biographies by the D'Aulaires stress the qualities that enabled their heroes to perform the acts of their greatness, and they stress those qualities especially as they appeared in childhood.

Genre

Biography is perhaps the most accessible form of non-fiction that elementary school children encounter, and it is becoming increasingly popular among writers and readers of children's books. The story for this unit, George Washington, fulfills the basic qualification of the genre: a biography is the story of a person's life.

There are some basic differences, however, between scholarly biographies written for adults and biographies written for children. Any respectable biography is accurate and authentic in its details as well as in its general pattern. Juvenile biographies are no exception although they usually leave out a good deal of the material that a complete biography will include, especially the more sordid or tragic details. But one should ask of a biography for children that it not be inaccurate or misleading in what it does present. The D'Aulaires are especially noted for the accuracy of detail in their biographies for children; they insist on studying the documentary evidence of a man's life and on actually seeing the scenes which they represent in their illustrations when they write a book.

In this connection, the study of biography gives students an opportunity to observe the compilation and arrangement of particular details to create a composite picture of what a man is and what he does, a process which is akin to the logical process of marshalling details to create a coherent inductive argument. Particularly for older children the study of biography may teach the student something of the responsibility a writer assumes for accuracy and reliability. First grade children cannot absorb much of the theory of logical processes, but they can observe in this story whether they think the authors are justified in repeating again and again that George Washington was "the first man in the country." Although it will not be well for the teacher to bring up the preposterous myth concerning the cherry tree in connection with this story, one of the children probably will. The teacher might want to impress on the children the importance of accuracy and authenticity by asking them why that incident was not included in this book. The children can perhaps recognize the difference between truth and fancy at this age; but the teacher should not, and probably could not, remove them from childhood so far as to suggest that fact is necessarily preferable to fancy.

Character

Since a biography in most instances seeks to tell the life story of an individual, the element of character is perhaps the most important single element in a biography. A biographer has the obligation to present his main character as completely and as honestly as he can, revealing his faults and his weaknesses as well as his virtues and his strengths. Biographies are progressively growing away from the nineteenth century concept of biography as an idol-worshiping tale with didactive motives, so that recent biographies are more likely to present characters that are not graven images, but fallible human beings. The overwhelming concern of the author should always be to present his subject as accurately and as near to what he really was as is possible. It is just one more tribute to the artistry of James Boswell that in spite of its uninhibited didactic purpose Boswell's Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson remains the greatest biography ever written. It was part of Boswell's theory that a biography as a history should reveal every side of its subject completely and accurately so as to exhibit what a man ought and ought not do with his life.

One does not find this revelation of the "inner man" the primary concern in biographies for children. Indeed, it is with cold disbelief that one encounters in George Washington the discordant "he learned to be good and honest and never tell a lie." Children judge a man not so much by what he is as by what he does. They do not judge him by his motives, his psychological reactions, his moral intentions, not even by his private virtues and vices; they judge a man by his actions, and only by those virtues and vices that he exhibits in his actions. Consequently, biographies for children reveal a man by telling what happened. Consider the superiority for children of "George Washington's coat was pierced by many bullets, but he was unharmed" to "George Washington was in great danger, but he was very brave and stood his ground." The author selects those items which reveal the outstanding characteristics of his hero (if he is a responsible author, he performs his task of selection scrupulously). As a result, children's biographies do not represent the "whole man" as precisely as adult biographies do; the characters in juvenile biographies are considerably flattened out as compared with their complexity in biographies for adults. The children can judge for themselves very well by the actions of George Washington whether he was brave, or kind, or cowardly, or benevolent, etc.

Structure

One cannot distinguish definite structural "motifs" or patterns in the body of literature identified as "biography" since the story of a man's life is pretty much determined by the life of the man. Nearly all biographies are told in a straight chronological narrative pattern. A true artist of the biography must achieve his dramatic and thematic effects more through the process of selection than through the process of arrangement. A biography usually contains the dramatic quality of development over a period of time. This concern with the sense of time in biography is unusual in children's literature, which usually operates within a context of "no time." Thus, since time is frozen in most children's stories, one of the values of teaching biography to children at an early age is the development of the historical sense of time.

Style

The style of George Washington is simple, straightforward, and matter-of-fact. The D'Aulaires have used figures of speech sparingly, but their story and especially their illustrations are rich in particular details that appeal to the sensory perception of young children. This story contains very little dialogue (and that largely invented) in order to achieve a dramatic effect. When an author invents a dialogue or puts thoughts into the heads of his characters in order to make the story "live," he may or may not have some actual documentary evidence to form the basis of what he invents. If the facts of a biography can be largely documented and only a few liberties have been taken with such matters as specific dialogue, the story is called "fictionalized biography." If the information concerning the historical character can only be documented in general and the story itself is largely the creation of the author centered around those general facts, the story is called "biographical fiction." George Washington achieves the status of "fictionalized biography," much the preferable of the two. In the D'Aulaires' story, the essential drama of the biography lies in the life of the hero; by using scholarly research as the basis for a conscientious retelling in a dramatic style, the authors have created a story that contributes measurably to children's literature.

Theme

A skillful biographer will not simply list the details of his subject's life in chronological order; he will usually shape the details into a meaningful whole knit together by one dominant theme. The D'Aulaires quite obviously conceived Washington as "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." By carefully relating the establishment of the characteristics of Washington in his boyhood that enabled him to become "the first man in the country" and going on to relate the development of those qualities and their application in his adult career, the authors have created a biography of integrity and significance.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES:

Literature Presentation

I. Be very familiar with the book before you begin to teach it and before you begin to introduce it to the students so your presentation will be free from legendary, but inaccurate, ideas. The book is probably too long to be read at one sitting. There seem to be two logical stopping places: first, just when Washington becomes an officer and, second, when he is chosen to become the commander-in-chief of the colonial armies.

II. Discussion should follow each of the three reading sessions. The children will enjoy not only what has happened but what they might expect to happen next.

A. 1st Session

1. Where did George Washington live first as a boy? Was the farm he lived on like farms you have seen? What was different about it?
2. What happened when young George first rode his new pony?
3. The Washingtons never had television. What did they do in the evening?
4. Where did the Washingtons go from Mount Vernon, their plantation? Were there any Indians there? Why do you suppose they had so much trouble getting there?
5. What did George want to be when he grew up? Why do you suppose he wanted to be an officer?
6. Was George a good rider? Do you think that was important?
7. What did young George study to become? Where would he get to go if he became a surveyor?
8. When did young Washington first meet Indians? Did he fight with them?

9. Now that Washington has become an army officer and he has had experience in the wilderness, what do you think he will do next?

B. 2nd Session

1. Why were the English fighting the French and the Indians?
2. Was Washington brave when he was out in the wilderness? How was he received when he returned?
3. What happened to the English soldiers when they didn't do what Washington advised them to?
4. What did Washington do after he had chased the French and the Indians out of Virginia? Was he happy just being a farmer at Mount Vernon after the exciting life as a soldier?

C. 3rd Session

1. Why was Washington chosen to be commander-in-chief of the army to defend the rights and liberties of the colonies? Do you know what "rights and liberties" are?
2. How did Washington have trouble with his army? Did the soldiers go back home because they were afraid to fight?
3. Did Washington win every battle he was in? When he lost, did he give up?
4. Why didn't Washington go home to Mount Vernon to spend the winter when everybody was so cold at Valley Forge?
5. Were the Englishmen mad at Washington when the war was over?
6. What did Washington do when the war was over? Was he happy being a farmer again at Mount Vernon?
7. Why did the people pick Washington to be the first president? Was he a good president?

Composition Activities

The children, either individually or as a group, could make up other stories about George Washington when he was a little boy. There is little dialogue in this story, so they might enjoy making up the things that Washington may have said on particular occasions--when he got his first pony, when he saw his first Indians, etc.

Language Explorations

I. Syntax

If the students make up a story that the teacher records on the board, she might draw attention to the concept of a sentence. As she writes the sentences on the board, she might mention, "This is the first sentence," and so on using the children's own examples.

II. Diction

Ask the children to make changes in the following sentences, seeing how many different ways they can say the same thing.

> "He was clever at arithmetic."
> "Nobody was better than he at riding and hunting."
> "In the evening his mother called the children together, and they all sat quietly around the fireplace in the living room."

Extended Activities

I. Some child or children may have visited Mount Vernon. If so, encourage him to tell about the visit, using slides or pictures if they are available.

II. There are a number of songs about Washington that the children would enjoy. Nearly all of them will know "Yankee Doodle." The following song by Isabel Innes might best be treated as a choral reading.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
by
Isabel Innes

Who rode a pony o'er the fields
And played he was a soldier,
The rules of conduct copied down
To use when he grew older?

George Washington, George Washington,
Father of our country.

Who roamed the woods and countryside
Went hunting with his brother,
Or often stayed around the house
As company for Mother?

George Washington, George Washington,
Father of our country.

Who helped the thirteen colonies
To join in federation,
And then was chosen President
Of our young growing nation?

George Washington, George Washington,
Father of our country.

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POETRY:

Robert Louis Stevenson, "Farewell to the Farm" Time for Poetry
(Other children react to "moving day" somewhat differently from the Washington children.)

Nancy Byrd Turner, "Washington" Time for Poetry
(Another account of Washington as a boy, exemplifying the youthful characteristics of a latent hero.)